BLACK SEA
CONSTANTINOPLE
SINOPE
SMYRNA
CONIUM
TAURUS
TARSUS
RHODES
CRETE
ANTIOCH
CYPRUS
MARGHAB
TORTOSA
TRIPOLI
BEIRUT
TYRE
ACRE
GREAT SEA
TIBERIAS
JAFFA
ALEXANDRIA
ASCALON
JERUSALEM
DAMIETTA
MANSURA
KERAK
MONTREAL
MAAN
CAIRO
AILA

SEA OF THE RAVENS
TIFLIS
ERZERUM
RISOND
KARVIN
ALAMUT
RAYI
MOSUL
RACCA
SA
CRUSADERS' TOWNS
MOSLEM TOWNS
CASTLES
CASTLES
BAGHDAD
BASSORAH
BAHR AL FARS
THE FLAME OF ISLAM

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THE CRUSADES

The Flame of Islam

BY HAROLD LAMB

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PART I

When *the Sun shall be* folded up, *and when the stars shall fall.*
And when the wild beasts shall be gathered together,
When souls shall be paired with their bodies . . .

And when the leaves of the Book shall be unrolled.
And when Hell shall be made to blaze, and when Paradise shall be brought near—
Every soul shall know what it hath produced.

And by the Night when it cometh darkening on,
And by the Dawn when it brighteneth . . .
Whither then are ye going?

Verily this is no other than a warning to all creatures:
To him among you who willeth to walk in a straight path.

THE KORAN.

I

THE FRONTIER

The year 1169 dawned upon a quiet East. Along this frontier of Christianity nothing unusual was taking place. Nothing ominous, that is. And in that part of the East known as the Holy Land the crusaders went about their affairs without misgivings.

There was, of course, no actual peace in the Holy Land—or in the rest of the world, at this time. And the harvest had been bad. During the last summer the rains had failed, and the wheat and barley crops in consequence had been poor. The cattle had suffered, and the fruit yielded little. At such times men often gave way to the temptation to harvest a neighbor's crops across the border, sword in hand. Both Christians and Moslems were accustomed to such raids.

For seventy years the Holy Land, around the city of Jerusalem, had remained in the hands of the victorious crusaders. They had settled here, and here they meant to stay. They had built their little cathedrals on the sacred places where Israel had prayed before them; they had crowned the rocky summits of isolated hills with their castles, and they were the lords of the land. Their sons knew no other land

than this, which they called *Outremer*—Beyond the Sea. And their grandsons were growing up here.

The Moslems accepted the presence of the conquerors as one of the inevitable things ordained by fate. They mourned the loss of Jerusalem, and they awaited the hour when the wheel of fortune would turn again and the holy city would be restored to Islam. Meanwhile, they were occupied with their own concerns beyond the border.

No boundary post marked the invisible line where Christianity ceased and Islam began. Only a watcher standing in the bell tower of the church of the Sepulcher could look toward the east, over the flat gray roofs of Jerusalem, over the parapet of the massive wall, past the haze of the Jordan gorge to the hard blue height of Moab's hills.

Beyond that line, he would be told, lay the lands of the *paynims*, the men of Islam. If he rode down with the pilgrims through the waste lands of clay and rock, to gather reeds at the edge of the muddy Jordan, he would see a squat tower with a stone corral around it, for the horses, and perhaps some men-at-arms in the shade of the olive trees.

If he dared cross the ford by the tower and ride on toward the east, he might come upon the stained black shelters of a Bedawin tribe, with its sheep and dogs. Instead of a tavern or hospice, he would find only the rough stone wall and cactus hedge of a caravan *serai*, in which to spend the night. Nowhere would he find any visible sign of the borderline.

It was invisible. But it lay, enduring and forbidding, between the men themselves. It separated Nazarene from Moslem—knight of the cross from the warrior of Islam. To cross it in reality a Christian must become a renegade. He must renounce his own faith to enter the world of Muhammad, the prophet. And few were the renegades on either side.

At this time, late in the Twelfth Century, men lived by the faith within them. To the wearers of the cross, the cross was the visible sign of an everlasting truth. They were the children of God, striving to follow the Seigneur Christ. Upon no other path would they set their feet.

To the Moslems, they were merely the People of the Book. True, Muhammad had said that the Messiah Jesus was one

of the prophets. But Allah was God indeed, and Muhammad had been his prophet. Upon the day when all souls would be weighed by the chains of judgment, they who believed would taste of Paradise, and they who believed not would know oblivion. No middle path existed—the Moslems were fiercely certain of that.

This gulf between Moslem and Christian could not be bridged by any bridge. They might live together in friendship, as many did live, but between them the breach stood as wide as ever. Muhammad had admonished his people never to make lasting peace with the unbelievers.

And the crusaders had taken Jerusalem. They meant to remain there, to tend the Garden of Gethsemane and to guard with their swords the Rock of Calvary over which they had built their churches. Jerusalem was the spot to be cherished above all others in the world.

But to the Moslems also Jerusalem was sacred. They called it *Al Kuds*, The Holy, and they held only Mecca and Medina in greater veneration. Muhammad's home had been in Mecca, and once he had fled to Medina—they dated the years of Islam from that flight. From the rock in Jerusalem, they believed, he had ascended from the earth, upon the back of his steed Burak. Now the crusaders had built a marble altar over the rock, and had placed a cross upon the dome that sheltered it. . . . The Moslems waited for the turning of the leaves of the book of fate.

They were not aware, nor were the crusaders aware, that in this year 1169 events were shaping that would break the long deadlock between them. The change came imperceptibly, and it began out of sight of the frontier, within the depths of Islam.

II

THE LAND OF THE ARABS

The world of Islam was restless as wind-swept sand It stretched, in fact, over all the deserts and barren ranges between Jebal at Tarik—Gibraltar—and the great heights of central Asia. Its people for the most part were nomads moving with their animals wherever grass grew. Such were the Bedawins, who clad themselves in the camel's hair and wool woven by their women. The children watched their flocks and black goats, while the women did all the work, even kneading rings of camel dung to dry for fuel. The men did the ploughing, with a wooden spike hitched by long ropes to a camel, followed by a harrow drawn by mules. These were the farming implements of Solomon's day, and the Bedawin cared for no better, so long as Allah sent rains from the sky. They knew every well of the waste lands, and they plundered every stranger who came to the wells.

To the common men of Islam, water was the veritable giver of life. Grass failed when the rains did not come. At such a time pools and cisterns became dry, or poisonous, and the herds were thinned. Pestilence followed a dry season.

On the other hand abundant flowing water created a kind of earthly paradise—from the mass of date palms around an oasis, to a hill garden fed by an underground channel. The stone tanks of the great mosques served for washing and drinking alike, and it was a poor palace that did not have a fountain of some kind.

About the rivers such as the Nile and Tigris whole peoples clustered, thriving in the flood periods, and sickening when the waters sank low. To these folk of the desert, coming in from the glare and the driven dust of the dry lands, the sheltered shadow, the soft greenery and cool air of an oasis or river gave relaxation and new life. Muhammad had assured them that Paradise would be one immense garden, where water miraculously never failed.

During the five centuries of Islam, the Arabs had become the aristocracy of the Moslems—the chosen people, dominant over Bedawin and Berber, black Sudani and patient Tajik. Victorious from Spain to China, they had held the lands and trade of half Asia in their hands. And, like the Romans, they had the pride of conquerors. Being both curious and adaptive, they had learned much from the culture of elder Greece and Persia. And as Latin had become the language of scholars and kings in Europe, Arabic had become the speech of educated men in western Asia. The Koran—the Book To Be Read—could be copied into no other language.

But in five centuries the Arabs had changed from the fanatical tribesmen who rode from Mecca under Khalid and Muavia with no other possessions than their swords and the memory of the exhortation of a dead prophet. As the Romans had done before them, they settled down in the conquered lands, to dispute fiercely among themselves. Unlike Rome, Mecca changed little. It remained the sanctuary of Islam, sheltering the great black stone, the Kaaba, and the sacred well of Zem-zem—the goal of the devout, where prayer availed a hundredfold and even the barren stones were blessed. In worldly splendor, however, the great cities of Cordoba and Alexandria, Damascus and Baghdad outgrew the desert city of the Prophet's birth. The Arabs had a taste for splendor.

In Damascus the descendants of Omar built a mosque that was a veritable wonder. An Arab traveler has described it as it was at this time.

Nowhere else is such magnificence. Its outer walls are of squared stones, and crowning the walls are splendid battlements. The columns supporting the roof of the mosque consist of black polished pillars in a triple row. In the center of the building is a great dome. Round the court are lofty colonnades above which stand arched windows, and the whole area is paved with white marble. For twice the height of a man the inner walls of the mosque are faced with variegated marbles, and above this, even to the ceiling, are mosaics of various colors and gold, showing figures of trees and towns and beautiful inscriptions, all most exquisitely worked. The capitals of the columns are covered with gold, and the columns around the court are all of white marble, while the walls that enclose it are adorned in mosaics.

Both within the mihrab and around it are set cut-agates and turquoises of the size of the finest stones that are used in rings. On the summit of the dome of the mosque is an orange and above it a pomegranate, both in gold. Before each of the four gates is a place for ablution, of marble, wherein is running water and fountains which flow into great marble basins. . . . The Kalif al Walid spent thereon the revenues of Syria for seven years, as well as eighteen shiploads of gold and silver.

But within the mosque over a sealed entrance that had been the door of the great Roman basilica upon the foundations of which the mosque had been built, remained an inscription worn by time—"*Thy Kingdom, O Christ, is an everlasting kingdom, and thy dominion endureth throughout all generations.*"

Indeed wealth flowed through the hands of the Arabs. They had become heritors, by virtue of their swords, of the vast palaces of Yazdigird and Samarkand; the sweep of their conquest had brought to their feet all the riches stored in the jeweled basilicas of Byzantium and the immense treasuries of Egypt. Their kalifs—the successors to Muhammad—lived in a golden haze of luxury. Haroun ar Raschid was dead, but the new Commanders of the Faithful rode through

courtyards as wide as open fields, attended by regiments of guards whose black-and-gold cloaks gleamed against the blue of the sky, and the plumed heads of the horses were like tawny wheat, tossing under the wind. And when the wind blew, the bronze lions roared by the gates.

Lovely Zenobia lay in her tomb, but the Bedawin spread their black tents within the white marble columns of her theater, in the shadow of the temple of Balkis where the palms nodded over the steaming sulphur springs.

Meanwhile wealth had changed the Arabs from single-minded warriors to shrewd merchants. Many a Sindbad sought his fortune in new lands. Caravans came down the slow, long road from Cathay, the laden camels bearing sacks of rhubarb, silk, or camphor and the musk of Tibet. Over the barrier ranges of India came spices, cinnamon, and precious stones. From the deserts of Arabia the caravans brought incense and dates. Where the trade routes crossed, as at Baghdad or Damascus, enormous markets exchanged the furs of the North for the precious stuffs of the East, and skilled workmen wrought fine fabrics—damask, brocades, or camelet.

In a single voyage a merchant made his fortune by bringing porcelain from China to Byzantium; there he took ship with a cargo of Greek brocade, for India. He sold this and bought Indian steel, conveying it overland by caravan to Aleppo, whence he took glassware to Yamen, going back to Persia with embroidered stuffs.

Their long open boats with towering lateen sails drifted down the wide rivers, and ventured overseas. The Arab masters knew the trade routes, and had, besides, serviceable maps and compasses at this time when European seamen felt their way along the northern coasts from headland to headland.

But in the last century a new power had entered Islam, displacing the Arabs to a great extent. From that immense reservoir of men beyond the heights of central Asia the pagan Turks appeared with their women and children and cattle. They had wolf heads on their standards, and a lust for war

in their hearts. They were the brood of the steppes and the lofty snow-filled valleys, and their strength was the untiring strength of barbarians. Some of them, Hungarians and Kazars, turned toward Europe; others wandered down the rivers, dwelling for a time at Bokhara and Samarkand, then pressing on to warmer lands. These, the Seljuks and Turkomans of the White and Black Sheep, made themselves lords of the eastern frontier of Islam. Under Mahmoud of Ghazni they penetrated India, while other Seljuks drifted into the service of the kalif of Baghdad.

Whereupon the race of Haroun ruled no more, and the Seljuks rode on to the west, until they could look across the waters at the walls of Constantinople. They became devout Moslems, and this new wave of conquest touched Christianity so near that it helped launch the crusades to free Jerusalem from the yoke of Islam. Fortunately for the crusaders, the last great sultan of the Seljuks, Malik Shah, had perished before their coming, and Islam remained divided among a dozen princes. In such a chaos the authority of the kalifs went unheeded.

But the Turks had brought new blood into the thinning veins of Islam; they made up the bulk of its armies. While the Turkish sultans ruled, the Arabs remained the intellectual class, with the threads of affairs under their capable fingers. And for generations they had followed a new policy, of conversion instead of conquest. Their *imams*, leaders, and *kadis*, judges, penetrated the Far East to make converts.

For the present this had no perceptible effect in the nearer East, yet they had tapped the reservoir of the barbaric clans, and had set new forces in motion. They had extended the dominion of Islam over vast territories, and as far as the guard posts of China the muezzins called the multitudes to prayer.

III

ISLAM

WHEN the muezzin called from his balcony, hundreds of thousands hastened to cleanse themselves and kneel toward Mecca. "Allah is Almighty—Allah is Almighty . . . I witness that there is no other god but Allah —I witness that Muhammad is his prophet . . Come to prayer—come to prayer . . . Come to the house of praise. Allah is Almighty—Allah is Almighty . . . There is no god but Allah!"

Islam—submission—bound together the unruly multitudes which had become *Muslimin*—Moslems, as the Christians called them—those who had submitted. Islam fed their cravings, and ordered the hours of their day. It put the sword in their hands, and bade them use it against the unbelievers. It made of them a gigantic brotherhood, apart from the other men of the world.

They were all wanderers at heart—why not, when God's earth was wide, with so much for their eyes to see within it? Islam enjoined upon them the duty of the pilgrimage, and of hospitality to other Moslems. The visitor within the bonds of Islam did not make a gift to his host; instead the master

of the house rewarded the guest. All property belonged to Allah, and they were but the keepers of it.

Islam assured them that all happenings were written down in the book of fate, even the hours of their deaths. But fatalism brought its anodyne. If the props of a weak dwelling collapsed and the roof fell in, and perhaps someone was killed —who could avert his fate? The house was rebuilt no stronger than before. When pestilence visited them, and hundreds of bodies were carried out of a single city gate in a day, the survivors bore the dead upon their shoulders and sat down to await what fate would bring them. It was all written, and what was written would come to pass.

These men of the desert had a code as rigid as any Christian law. The Bedawin who would club a stranger to death on the road to take his horse would not lift hand against the man who had eaten of his salt. Tribesmen who would rather kill than loot and would much rather loot than eat would pass without a glance the goods of another clan left for safe keeping by the grave of a holy man.

Lying was an ancient art with them, but they would hold with few exceptions to a spoken promise. "What is profit without honor?" they said.

The brotherhood of Islam had a strange and restless freedom within it. Its rulers were all autocrats, as the patriarchs of the clans had been before them. The sultan or prince was answerable only to Allah for his deeds, but his servants would sit by his bed and worry him out of sleep if they disapproved of his conduct. His deeds must be weighed in the scales of the Koran, and if the balance were against him, a venerable kadi would appear to exhort him to better things.

A prince might seize the property of his followers, but if he did they could haunt his doorstep and beg for charity. All the goods and gear of the dead, indeed, went into his hands by right; yet woe to the lord who did not provide for widows and orphans. Like the baron of feudal Europe, he bestowed grants of land and dwellings on his vassals who must come at his summons—after their fields were planted—to serve in his wars. In their turn, they must make annual gifts of money, horses, weapons, or slaves to the prince. The spoil

taken in war was divided between the prince and his vassals.

Besides this levy of the vassals, the greater princes of Islam had what may be called standing armies. Masterless warriors enlisted in his pay, and ate of his salt. Sometimes he bought outright slaves trained to arms who were known as *mamluks* —"the possessed." These mamluks were of Turkish origin, and since they were both loyal and formidable in arms, they became the flower of the armies. Usually they composed the bodyguards of the princes, and their sons succeeded to their position and pay. Like the Cossacks of a later day, they could turn their hands to other work, training horses, building bridges, or caring for falcons or messenger pigeons. They followed the hunt as eagerly as their masters.

Already most of the reigning princes of this portion of Asia between the sands of the Sahara and the hill barriers of Persia were *atabegs*, Father Commanders—Turkish captains of war who had first served and then displaced the powerful Arab families. Mahmoud of Ghazni had been born a slave.

Moslem slaves had little to regret. They could, of course, be sold in the open market, and their lives rested upon the pleasure of their masters. But the position of slaves was an honorable one in this brotherhood of Islam, since the master had the obligation to protect and care for his servitors, and many a lord was ruled in reality by his domineering slaves, especially if they were mamluks. Women and infidel slaves were entitled to no more care than the beasts.

All this motley world of Islam came together in fellowship upon the Hadj, the Pilgrim Road. Gaunt Turkomans in sheepskins from the north sheathed their *yataghans* and trotted quietly beside their feudal foemen the Kurds of the hills. Black slaves from Egypt clad in flaming crimson guarded the tall, swaying dromedaries that bore within screened hampers the women of some amir or prince.

Learned kadis, sitting sidewise on donkeys under the parasols held by their disciples, discoursed of the merits of the road of salvation, and barefoot pilgrims thronged around to listen. Somber warriors, shields swinging upon their shoulders, stared through the dust at a passing cavalcade of merchants in striped *khalats* with heavy purses swaying at their girdles

—and forbore to plunder. Fly-infested beggars thrust out their bowls unreproved.

Veiled women, as sturdy as the warriors, with all the pride of poverty and suffering, tugged at the halter ropes of mules upon which old grandsires clung, on their last journey to the city of salvation. They all gathered together in the serais at night to share fire and food and to watch the antics of the dervishes who circled slowly and chanted to the thrumming of the drums. Holy men with shaven skulls sat patiently in the dirt and dung by the beasts, waiting to accept the leavings of the food. They were all sons of the road, and it was good to be upon the road of salvation.

They could not go to Jerusalem, where the crusaders barred the way, but they knew every tradition of that holy city—how lost souls wailed of nights in the Valley of the Damned under the Golden Gate. How the white marble height of the Noble Sanctuary[1] awaited the final day of judgment, when the souls of the faithful would gather in the Cavern of Souls under the rock of Muhammad's ascension, and Solomon himself would sit in judgment before the chains, with David and the Messiah Jesus at his side. They even knew just where the chains hung, from the great arches. They had built, before the coming of the infidels, a dome over the sitting place of Solomon, in readiness for this ultimate event.

They cherished old customs, but their restless minds led them off after new soothsayers and would-be prophets, for they were as changeable as children. Credulous and impulsive, they could be fired by an idea. A strong man could lead them easily, but only a saint of Islam could restrain them or hold them together for any time.

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[1]The Haram, the quarter sacred to the Moslems in Jerusalem, lies above the site of Solomon's temple. The rock from which they believed Muhammad ascended is thought to have been the altar of burnt offerings of the Israelites. In the vaulted chambers under the El Aksa mosque at the end of the Haram, remnants of Herod's temple are still to be seen. Even to-day under British control, Christian visitors are admitted to the Haram only upon sufferance. During the Arab-Jewish troubles in August and September 1929, the Golden Gate and the underground chambers as well as the Cavern of Souls were closed to visitors. The present writer was allowed to inspect them by permission of the mufti of Jerusalem.

Ceaselessly they disputed among themselves about the details of their faith, yet they were more than ready to tear the limbs from a mocker of their faith. The only thing capable of welding them together was war—the holy war against unbelievers. Muhammad had exhorted them never to fail in the holy war, the *jihad*. At such a time all Islam would unite, burning with the fever of martyrdom, and who could stand against Islam?

But, until now, they had found no one to lead a jihad against the crusaders. For a time they had rallied to Zangi, the atabeg of Mosul who captured Edessa from the Christians and so brought down upon them the second of the crusades. In their anger they had mobbed the pulpit of Baghdad where the kalif behind his black veil remained impotent against the crusaders. Yet the leader had not come forth.

Now, in the year 1169, Nur ad Din, the great sultan of Damascus, preached the jihad. Nur ad Din, however, was old—a man of sanctity incapable of forcing the issue against the Christian knights. Another leader must be found.

IV

THE KNIGHTS OF THE PROPHET

As in Christendom, the youth of Islam went to a hard school. Boys grew up under rigid authority, taught by *khojas* and *hadjis*, sitting in the wide courtyards of the mosques. For the aristocracy of Islam was one of learning as well as the sword, and the Arab and Turkish youngsters swayed in unison as they memorized the sonorous verses of the Koran, even if they did not master reading.

Old mamluks taught them the use of the bow, handled from the saddle, not from the ground. They practised in the riding fields with slender bamboo lances, and became adept at sword play—the swift strokes of the pliant curved blades. They raced their ponies and longed for the battle-wise thoroughbreds of the stern lords their fathers. The richest of them found diversion in the favorite game of *mall*, in which the riders drove a ball about the field with mallets—the game that is polo to-day.

Wine was forbidden them, and dalliance with women denied them until full manhood. Their teachers frowned upon gaming, and even chess was a sport reserved for the elder men. True, they could watch the exciting magic lantern that

cast its shadow figures upon the wall, or a rare puppet show in which the ageless Punch cracked obscene jokes and beat his wife. Yet laughter touched them seldom and most of them grew up somber, intent on the affairs of men.

They shared, of course, in the hunting that was half the life of the Moslem nobles—hunting with falcon, panther, bow, or spear. One of them, Ousama, a son of the lord of Shaizar, has left us a tale of his hunting in the beginning of the Twelfth Century.

In the house of my father, by Allah, we had about twenty captive gazelles, with brown coats and white coats. Also young gazelles, born in his house, and stallions and goats. He would send his men to far-off lands to buy falcons, even to Constantinople.

I have taken part in the hunting of great lords, but I have never seen hunts like those of my father—may Allah have mercy upon him. He spent all his time during the day in reciting the Koran, in fasting and in hunting; during the night he copied down the Book of Allah the Most High. He made two copies written from one end to the other in gold.

Now we had at Shaizar two places good for the chase—one on the mountain where partridges and hares were plentiful, the other by the banks of the river where waterfowl, grouse, and antelope were to be met.

Falcons became as common as chickens with us, and the servants of my father—may Allah have mercy on him—were mostly falconers and saker keepers and men who looked after the dogs. He taught his company of mamluks the art of caring for falcons.

As for him, he went out to hunt accompanied by his four sons, and we ourselves brought along our esquires, our led horses and weapons—because we were not safe from encounters with the Franks,[1] our neighbors. We brought more than a dozen falcons with us each time, and pairs of men to look after the sakers, the hunting leopards and the dogs. One man went with the greyhounds, the other with the brach-hounds.

On the way to the mountain, my father would say to us, "Scatter. Whoever has not yet finished his reading of the Koran, let him fulfil his duty." Then we, his sons, who knew the Koran by heart,

[1]The crusaders. Ousama lived in the foothills near Hamah, and to the west of his castle stretched the mountains. Two of the crusaders' citadels, the great Krak des Chevaliers and Marghab, lay across this borderline, within raiding distance of Hamah.

would separate one from another and would recite until we reached the meeting place.

Then my father gave his orders to the squires who went off to look for partridges. Still there remained with my father, between his companions and the mamluks, forty horsemen, experienced hunters. As soon as a bird took flight, or a hare or antelope stirred up the dust, we were off after them, ready to loose the falcons at them. So we arrived at the top of the mountain. The ride lasted until the afternoon. Then we went back, after feeding the falcons and let them down at the mountain springs where they drank and bathed themselves.

Whenever we mounted our horses toward the place of waterfowl and grouse, it was an amusing day. We left the hunting leopards and sakers outside the reed beds, and only took the falcons with us into the marshy ground. If a grouse flew, a falcon was after it. If a hare jumped up we cast a falcon at it, which took it or drove it toward the leopards. Then the keeper loosed a leopard at it. If a gazelle jumped out toward the leopards, they were sent after it. Often they captured it.

In these swampy reed beds, there were numbers of wild boars. We rode at a gallop to fight and kill them, and then our joy was intense.

One of the falcons, although still quite young, was large as an eagle. The head falconer Gana'im used to say, "This one called al Yashur has not its equal among the falcons. It will not leave any game without taking it." At first we doubted him.

Gana'im trained al Yashur. It became like one of our household. In the hawking, it served its master, unlike other birds of prey that pursue the quarry for themselves. Al Yashur lived beside my father, and was well able to look after itself. If it wished to bathe, it moved its beak in the water to show what it desired. Then my father ordered a tub of water to be placed near it. When it came out, my father put it on a wooden gauntlet made especially for it, and set the gauntlet by a lighted brazier. Then the falcon was combed and rubbed with oil, and they rolled up a fur cloak for it, on which it settled down and slept. If my father wanted to go off to the women's chambers, he would say, "Bring the falcon," and it would be brought asleep as it was, and the cloak placed beside the bed of my father—may Allah have mercy on him.

In the winter, the waters flooded the ground near Shaizar, and waterfowl gathered in the pools. My father himself would take al Yashur on his wrist and go up to the citadel to show it the birds. The citadel lay to the east, while the birds were to the west of the

town. As soon as the falcon had seen the birds, my father let it go, and it flew over the town until it reached the quarry and seized its booty.

When the pursuit was lucky, the falcon came down again near us. If not, it took shelter in one of the caves along the river—we did not know where. The next morning the falconer would go to look for it, and would bring it back.

Mahmoud, lord of Hamah at that time, would send over every year to ask for the falcon, which was sent to him with a keeper, and was used in his hunting for twenty days.

But al Yashur died at Shaizar.

One morning I went to visit Mahmoud at Hamah. While I was there, the readers of the Koran came into view, with mourners crying, "Great is the Lord!" I asked who was dead, and they replied, "One of Mahmoud's daughters." I wanted to go with them to the funeral, but Mahmoud forbade me.

They all went out and buried the body, and when they came back Mahmoud asked me, "Knowest thou who the dead person was?" I made answer, "It was told me—one of thy children." He answered, "Nay, by Allah, it was the falcon al Yashur. When I heard that it was dead, I sent for it and ordered a shroud and a funeral, and buried it. Indeed, it was worth all of that."

One hunting leopard also lived in our house, in a shed built for it with hay in it. A hole was made in the wall by which the leopard could go in and out. This unusual animal had a servant to care for it.

Among the guests of our house at that time was the old and wise Abou Abdallah of Toledo. He had been director of the House of Science in Tripoli. When the Franks captured this town, my father took the *shaikh* Abou Abdallah for himself. I studied grammar under him for ten years.

One day I found him with the following texts in front of him—the Book of Sibawaihi, the Particulars of ibn Jinni, the Elucidation of al Farisi, and also the Examples and the Flowers of Speech. I said to him, "O *shaikh* hast thou read all of these books?" He answered, "Indeed I have read them, or rather, by Allah, I have copied them out. Dost thou wish to be convinced? Choose any text, open it and read to me the first line of the leaf."

I took up one of them; I opened it and read a line. He resumed reading from memory until he had finished the part. That was a remarkable phenomenon. At another time I saw Abou Abdallah. He had been hunting with this hunting leopard. He was mounted on a horse, with his feet wrapped in bloodstained bandages. While

he had been following the leopard, thorns on the ground had torn his feet. Yet he did not feel the hurt at the time because he had been absorbed in watching the leopard seize the gazelles![1]

Men of letters like Abou Abdallah were welcome guests in the houses of the nobles. "The ink of the learned"—so a proverb ran—"is as precious as the blood of the martyrs."

And beside them sat the scientists, astronomers, physicians, and engineers. Because the astronomers interpreted omens and calculated fortunate days, they were important personages and usually received large salaries from the princes.

On the flat roofs of the palaces they had their spheres of bronze, their zodiacs and horizons, carefully made. Already they had set down in tables the orbits of the planets, and had calculated the vagaries of the moon's motion—six centuries before Europeans did so. They had even worked out an exact calendar, but the expounders of the Law would have nothing that altered Muhammad's choice of the months of the moon. They had translated the books of the Greeks, and compared them with the Ptolemaic and Hindu theories, and had learned much.

The Arabs had been wise enough to study the Roman ruins that they found scattered through their conquests. Dikes and aqueducts and hydraulic works seemed good to these avid intellects of the dry lands, and they copied them while Europeans made quarries out of them.

Someone translated Aristotle, and he became for better or worse the ideal of Moslem philosophers. Natural law and the dicta of logic he made clear to them.

Their mathematicians—who were at home with algebra and the decimal system—worked out latitude and longitude. And, having noted down the tidings brought by travelers and seamen, made excellent maps. A certain Idrisi completed a silver chart of the Mediterranean etched on a silver shield.

Cairo, as well as Baghdad, had its House of Science, with an observatory and a library. A cool and quiet place the

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[1]From the memoirs of Ousama, translated from the Arabic by M. Hartwig Derenbourg—"*Souvenirs historiques et récits de chasse par un émir syrien du douzième siècle.*"

library, with its manuscripts arranged in cubicles up the walls, and its cushioned rugs where men of letters could sit, reading the volumes on the stands in front of their knees and sipping sherbet. In the cubicles lay Greek texts of Archimedes and Galen.

Paper had been known to the Arabs for some time—paper made of cotton, at first in Samarkand, then in Damascus. The secret of making it had come from China over the caravan road with many other things.

The Arab physicians had secrets of their own. They knew of more than simple remedies, having studied a bit of chemistry and the course of the blood. Most ills they treated by diet and hygiene, while the Christians of Europe still searched for malignant demons.

And a few years before, Nur ad Din, the enlightened sultan of Damascus, had built a public hospital where physicians made examinations and gave out drugs. Only in surgery were the men of medicine deficient—because the expounders of the Law forbade them to cut or alter human bodies.

The keen minds of the Arab scientists probed into the causes of things. They followed Aristotle into the mysteries of Nature, and pondered. And out of their pondering grew disbelief in religion. About the philosophers gathered groups of doubters, invoking the mantle of Pythagoras. Mysticism went hand in hand with scepticism.

A century before, the wine-loving court mathematician of the last great Seljuk sultan had written:

Myself when young did eagerly frequent
Doctor and Saint, and heard great argument
About it and about; but evermore
Came out by the same door where in I went.

V

THE ASSASSINS

An echo of Omar's plaint was heard within Cairo, where the free-thinkers gathered together. Cairo itself lay beyond the authority of the orthodox kalif of Baghdad and the idlers in its courtyards dared mock at Islam while they nourished secrets of their own. They were known as Ismailites, and they built a lodge of their own, sending out into the East their missionaries of unbelief. And thereby hangs a tale so strange that, although the truth of it was established long ago, it has the seeming of a myth. The tale is of the Old Man of the Mountain, as the crusaders called him.

During the lifetime of Omar lived one Hassan ibn Sabah, a free-thinker, an Ismailite, and a man of consummate ambition. This extraordinary soul was not content to be a missionary of scepticism; he dreamed of a new power. He said that with a half-dozen *faithful* servants he could make himself master of the world.

It is related that after he said this, one of his friends fed him meals of saffron and a certain wine—supposed to be remedies for madness. Later, Hassan sent a message to this friend: "Which of us is mad now?"

Because, in a way, he made good his prophecy. At least he became the Old Man of the Mountain.

In the beginning, undoubtedly, Hassan possessed great personal magnetism. The half-dozen allies that he desired he acquired readily enough by his boldness. He preached a very simple creed, "Nothing is true, and all is permitted." And he gained attention by ridiculing some of the rather absurd traditions of orthodox Islam.

He formed his followers into a secret order, divided into preachers, companions, and *fedawi*—devoted ones. These became the real key of his success. They were the Assassins. Garbed in white, with blood-red girdle and slippers, each of them carried a pair of long curved knives. They were young, and Hassan initiated them into the secrets of hemp eating and the virtue of opium mixed with wine until they became in reality the blind instruments of his will. He convinced them that death was verily the door to an everlasting delight, of which the drug dreams gave them only a foretaste.

To these youths Hassan appeared to be a prophet more potent than any figure of Islam; to discontented souls he presented himself as a liberator; only to the few subtle minds of his order did the master reveal his real purpose—to win power by instilling fear, and wealth by upsetting the existing order of things.

"Bury everything sacred," he explained, "under the ruins of thrones and altars."

And he began a schedule of assassination, to create fear. Usually three fedawis would be sent to kill the appointed victim, often at the hour of public prayer in a mosque. The first Assassin would leap at the condemned man and stab him; if he failed, the second and third would make their attempt in the ensuing confusion. Since they themselves rather sought than avoided death, they rarely failed in their mission. At other times they would disguise themselves as servants, or camel men—water carriers, anything. In the crowded streets of Muhammadan cities such folk throng past their betters.

His first victim was the wisest soul in Islam, Omar's patron and his own benefactor, Nizam al Mulk, the minister of the

great Seljuks. Nizam's death hastened the break-up of the Seljuk empire—and Hassan profited from the chaos. He dared assassinate Maudud, the *ghazi* of the North.

Shrewdly, he profited more from the fear caused by his daggers than from the killings. Who cared to refuse him an annual tribute to escape the daggers? Hassan was punctilious about his word. If he promised a victim immunity, the man went unharmed.

Naturally, many amirs and sultans made open war on him. In whole districts the *mulahid*, heretics—as his followers were called—were searched out and slain. But Hassan himself proved elusive. And other lords, who were afraid of the daggers, protected him. One influential teacher preached against him, cursing him publicly, and before long an Assassin knelt upon the chest of the too-daring preacher, in the seclusion of his study. A long knife pricked the soft skin of his stomach. After the fedawi had vanished, the preacher no longer cursed the heretics, and his disciples asked him why.

"They have arguments," said the great man, who was not without humor, "that cannot be refuted."

And then, again, an enemy of the order would awake to find two daggers thrust into the carpet beside his head. The resulting dread of overhanging peril would sap the courage of a man who did not fear the open shock of battle. No one was immune. A kalif of Cairo fell under the daggers.

But Hassan's greatest conception was his castles. Usually a Moslem lord had his citadel on some height within a town. The grand master of the new order of death sought out sites upon the mountains overlooking a city. Existing castles he bought or intrigued for, and in the wild mountain districts he built strongholds of his own. These were of stone, and almost impregnable—so that a few men could hold them. So Hassan came to be called the *Shaikh al jebal*—the Old Man of the Mountain. And no old man of the sea was ever such a burden as he. To his strongholds flocked all unruly spirits, and he made a place for all. Few cities in the hill regions of Persia and Syria did not have a castle of the Assassins to reckon with.

At the end of his life Hassan had managed to lay the foun-

dation for his strange new *imperium*. He ruled an empire of his own, from Samarkand to Cairo—wherever stood the mountains. His plan after all was simple: he had laid the governing powers under contribution, and enlisted the revolutionary powers of the people. Having established a perpetual reign of terror and profited much from it, he died and another grand master headed the order.

And at this time, paradise was built. Tales of it filled all nearer Asia, and generations passed before the outer world knew the secret of it.

Alamut—the Eagle's Nest—was the headquarters of the order. Here, on the summit of an unclimbable mountain, a walled garden had been built—a garden filled with exotic trees, with marble fountains that tossed wine spray into the sunlight, with silk-carpeted pavilions and tiled kiosks. The melody of invisible musicians hung upon the air, and all men who entered were wrapped in the dreams of opium, or yielded the bodies of beautiful girls.

And only the young Assassins could enter this paradise. First, they were given a drug and carried in a coma to the garden, where they awakened to every delight of the senses. Then, after two or three days they were drugged again and carried out into the castle of Alamut, where they were told that, in reality, they had been allowed to visit the unearthly paradise—the place that awaited them at death. No island of lotus eaters quite compared to the garden of the Eagle's Nest. Above the entrance gate was written:

AIDED BY GOD
THE MASTER OF THE WORLD
BREAKS THE CHAINS OF THE LAW.
SALUTE TO HIS NAME!

Just how the Assassins managed to appear to be all things to all men is one of the mysteries of elder Asia, wherein the straight path often went roundabout, and prophets spoke in parables, and sanctuaries were veiled, and men were led by ideas instead of rules.

VI

THE KALIF'S CURTAIN

THE Assassins were in fact very much like vultures, perched in their rocky eyries, watching the movements of human beings in the crowded valleys below. No one knew in what place the shadow of the vultures' wings would fall—although they were most often seen in the mountain region of Persia far to the east, and in the hills north of Lebanon that divided the crusaders and the Moslems. During the chaotic conditions of the last hundred years they had risen to the height of their power. They were, however, by no means supreme.

For one thing the kalifs still reigned in Baghdad—no more than specters of the early kalifs, but still with the black veil and the mantle of the prophet upon them. North of Baghdad, up the ancient Tigris and Euphrates, extended a network of little dominions ruled by the atabegs—the war lords whose chief citadels lay in the gray rock of Aleppo above the red wheat fields, and in mighty Edessa with its ruined churches standing desolate. Still farther north the warlike Armenians clung to their mountain villages in the barrier range of the Taurus.

Beyond them lay Asia Minor, its lofty plateau a grazing

ground for the sultan of Roum, Kilidj Arslan by name. He was almost the only surviving prince of the Seljuk line, and he was gradually pushing the Byzantines back, within the shelter of the walls of Constantinople.

And one man was patiently tracing a pattern of order through this kaleidoscope of the Near East. Nur ad Din, the son of Zangi, had made himself supreme over the minor chieftains and he ruled over the beginning of an empire, from Edessa in the north to the Arabian desert in the south. Light of the Faith, they called him—a just man, rigorous and devout, but too old to follow the path of war in the saddle. He had lieutenants more than willing to do this for him, Shirkuh the Mountain Lion, and Ayoub his brother—Kurds who made a hobby of statesmanship and a pastime of war.

Nur ad Din reigned in Damascus, the Bride of the Earth, and he was loath to leave its fruit gardens where lines of willows and poplars kept out the desert dust, and swift waters murmured under old bridges. He prayed in the great mosque, with white turbaned hadjis sitting by the opened windows of colored glass, ceaselessly intoning the verses of the Book To Be Read. Beside the mosque clustered the tombs of Islam's elder champions, in the rose gardens under the dark mulberry trees. Through the four gates pattered the bare feet of children hastening to a teacher's desk, and the limping feet of the sick, and the firm feet of the lords.

He had brought peace to Damascus. Under the latticed arcades of the alleys gray heads bent over chessboards of inlaid ebony and ivory while bearded lips muttered the gossip of the roads; at night upon the terraces stately figures scented with civet knelt about the banquet cloth, sipping sherbet while the pungent smoke of burning ambergris drifted up, and lutes wailed. Against the marble fretwork of balconies overhead, fair faces pressed and dark eyes searched the shadows of the narrow streets, watching the torches of an amir's cavalcade go by, or the plodding lantern of a drowsy donkey.

It was due to Nur ad Din, the son of the atabeg, that comparative quiet prevailed in the Near East in this year 1169, because, while he held the unruly north in rein, he had made a truce with the crusaders.

These indomitable fighters lay within Islam but not of it—separated by the long natural barrier of Lebanon, beside which the Jordan descended into the Dead Sea.

There was, however, a third power to be reckoned with, in Cairo.

El Kahira, men called her, the Guarded. Others knew her as the City of the Tents. She was mistress of the Nile, luxuriant and fecund and ageless. Toward her gates rode the merchants of all Asia, and from her port of Alexandria went forth the ships of all the seas. Within her coffers lay wealth incalculable.

But she was harassed and bereft. Too much blood had been shed in the halls of her palaces by the great Gray Mosque; the tombs of her mighty ones had fallen into neglect, and down by the river the tents of the Bedawin stood among smoke-darkened ruins. "The mark of the Beast," devout Moslems said, "is upon her." For the kalif of Cairo was apart from orthodox Islam, a schismatic, his adherents devotees of Fatima, the daughter of Muhammad. He wore white instead of traditional black and his unruly congregation believed passionately in the coming of El Mahdi, the Guided One, who would be a second Muhammad.

This Fatimid kalif lived in guarded seclusion. Sudani swordsmen filled the corridors of the Great Palace, and paced the mosaic floors of the antechambers, by the marble fountains where peacocks strutted and parrots screamed. The audience hall glistened like a gigantic treasure vault with its ceiling of carved wood inlaid with gold, and its inanimate birds fashioned of silver and enamel feathers and ruby eyes. But the kalif was hidden from the eyes of the curious by a double curtain of gilt leather. Men said that he ate from gold dishes and drank from amber cups—he and the bevy of his women. When he went from the city a pavilion wrought of gold and silver thread accompanied him; when he wished to enjoy the cooler air upon the river, a silver barge awaited him.

Rumor said more than this. Within the foundation of the palace, fair girls had been walled in, alive, as a sacrifice. A gilt

cage was kept in readiness to receive the kalif of Baghdad as a captive, if the arms of Cairo should ever prevail over the host of orthodox Islam. And up the river—so rumor insisted—there was a hidden pleasure kiosk built in the semblance of the sacred Kaaba of Mecca, and a marble pool filled with wine, to mock the holy well of Zem-zem. Darker whispers could be heard in the seclusion of the *harim*—of a kalif who had poisoned his son, and a wazir who had been cut to pieces by the palace women.

The kalif ruled Egypt only in name, the real power in the hand of his wazir, or minister. The kalif had become a figurehead, the wazir a dictator. Between them they had bought off the enemies of Egypt for years, while the kalif amassed new treasures. They had managed to play the invincible Christian knights against the victorious armies of Nur ad Din. Once they had paid the crusaders to beat off an attack by Shirkuh, and then they had summoned Shirkuh to defend the city against a foray of the king of Jerusalem.

A dangerous game, this of buying protection. The knights of Jerusalem and the mamluks of Damascus had both tasted the honey pots of the Great Palace, and had seen with their own eyes the weakness of the men of Cairo. This taste only whetted their appetite for more.

Amalric, king of Jerusalem, was a fighter and an aggressive fighter. Clearly he saw that the capture of Cairo and the line of the Nile would bring final triumph to the crusaders, and would break the deadlock between Jerusalem and Damascus. The possession of the kalif's treasures alone might do that, but if the crusaders could hold Cairo and the narrow isthmus of Suez (where the canal now lies) they would separate the Moslem of the Near East from those on the African coast.

And Shirkuh saw the situation just as clearly. He pointed out to Nur ad Din that the crusader castles below the Dead Sea made a salient that almost cut off Damascus from Cairo. Moslem caravans had to feel their way through the desert, to steal past the watchful eyes of the Christians. With Cairo in his hands, Nur ad Din could pinch out this salient, and then attack Jerusalem from two sides.

Amalric started the race for Cairo as the year 1168 ended. Having the shorter distance to go, he was first upon the scene. But the fiery general of Nur ad Din was close on his heels with a greater host, and Amalric, having failed to surprise Cairo, was forced to withdraw as quickly as he had come, to his own lands. Thence he journeyed to Constantinople to beseech aid from the Byzantine emperor.

Not so did Shirkuh. He saw his chance and took it. Riding triumphantly into the gates of Cairo, he boldly claimed the reward of a rescuer and the kalif received him with outward rejoicing and inward misgiving. At once the Mountain Lion pounced upon the hapless wazir who had played the double game of intrigue for so long, and the kalif agreed that it was full time the wazir died. Whereupon Shirkuh was invested in a robe of honor and duly declared wazir of Egypt.

It became apparent that Shirkuh meant to be dictator in fact as well as in name. The swaggering Kurd overrode the Fatimid officials and collected his own taxes, to the mingled fear and admiration of the watching Cairenes. The kalif stayed behind his curtain. Whether he was served by convenient poison or not, Shirkuh died almost in the moment of his triumph.

His death left Nur ad Din's army without a head, and the kalif without anything to protect him from the army. The situation was precarious and the amirs of the army agreed with the kalif that a new wazir should be chosen at once. They debated among themselves and named Shirkuh's nephew—to win the loyalty of Shirkuh's mamluks—a young officer who was a general favorite. And the kalif agreed at once, seeing in the officer a man too young to be experienced—an easier soul to deal with than Shirkuh.

So the kalif sent a new robe of honor out to the camp, with an escort of kadis to salute the hitherto obscure officer and to bestow upon him his name title—El Malik en Nasr, the Conquering King.

The officer was Saladin.

VII

SALADIN

SHIRKUH's nephew thus became administrator of Egypt at a time when the kaleidoscope of the Near East was shifting in even more than its wonted fashion. He discovered himself to be at once the wazir of a schismatic kalif and the general of the orthodox army of Damascus; he must be pacifier of an unruly country, and defender extraordinary against that veteran warrior, Amalric of Jerusalem. Some of the older amirs, jealous because a little-known youth had been placed over them, left the army and went back to Damascus with their men. Others remained expecting that Nur ad Din would appoint someone else in his place. It would be hard to conceive of a more trying situation.

Yet Saladin[1] emerged from it undisturbed. And in the end he made a name for himself greater than that of the two giants of his day, Frederick Barbarossa and Richard the Lion Heart.

Even in the beginning he had the gifts of patience and firm

[1]Salah ad Din. Moslems in general addressed him by his official title, Malik en Nasr. The crusaders wrote down his name as Saladin and by this name he has been known to Christendom for more than seven centuries.

determination. By birth he was a Kurd, of the northern hills where the patriarchs still led the clans. Like the Scottish Highlanders, the Kurds of that day knew the law of the sword and of loyalty. They were like the Arabs but apart from them. Lean and dark and passionate, they had all the pride of the elder Greeks. The spoken word was their bond, and he who had shared their salt was safe from harm at the hand of the giver of the salt. All Kurds were soldiers by inclination, and devout Muhammadans by tradition. But Saladin—strangely, in a Kurd—had no love of fighting for its own sake.

Slight in body, subject to intermittent fever, he lacked the energy that makes a sport of war. Courteous and shy and self-contained, he avoided quarrels. He had a taste for fine horses and rare wine, and books. He played polo well, and he sought leisure rather than public honors.

He had not wanted to come to Egypt this time. "By Allah," he had said, "if you offered me the kingdom of Egypt, I would not go. I have suffered at Alexandria ordeals which I will never forget."

But go he did, at the request of Nur ad Din—he who once had held Alexandria for Shirkuh against the siege of the crusaders for seventy-five days. Rumor has it that the Christian knights esteemed him and welcomed him into their company.

"No man may escape his fate," the jesters of the bazaar pointed out. "Lo, here is this same Saladin now master of Egypt."

Only this much is known of Saladin. The shadowy outline is that of a recluse and a scholar more than a warrior. Yet Saladin was sought after by the lords of Islam, and the men of the army accepted his leadership. That he was able to command he proved at once, when the throngs of Cairo rioted, and he hung the worst of them. He defended Damietta against the Byzantine fleet that came down later in the year.

He even struck a counter-blow at the Christians, raiding with his mamluks across the sands, and plundering Amalric's outposts. Still, he was not reconciled to Cairo and its endless responsibility. When his father Ayoub—a shrewd and impetuous statesman, then governor of Damascus—joined him

in the city, he offered to yield the wazirship to him. The old Kurd refused.

"Am I," he said, "to alter what hath been done by fate? Nay, thou art the wazir!"

Whereupon Saladin plunged into the task of creating an orderly government in Egypt out of the prevailing chaos. He had been chosen dictator and dictator he would be.

Cairo, blackened by fires, scarred by plague, rotted by bad water, had not known a firm hand for generations. Only the newer part of the city with its palaces and mosques lay within the massive brick wall; the rest of it, between the bare brown hills and the distant peaks of Ghizeh's pyramids, was a half-ruined waste where Bedawins prowled and looted dismantled tombs, when the mist hung over the river.

But the life of the bazaars went on apace, and wealth gleamed amid the débris. Under the arches of the *souk*, carpets were piled high and hemp bales pressed against jars of olive oil—colored lamps burned through the night above chests of spices and pearls from the Indies watched by swordsmen from Marghrab or Rayi. In this labyrinth crowded a multitude of buyers and sellers; Jews in blue robes bargained shrilly with Armenians and Venetians who wore bells about their necks to show that they were despised Nazarenes. If they rode donkeys they had to sit face to tail.

For this was the true city of the Thousand and One Nights, sleepless, indolent, and very wise. Arab *shaikhs* in dark robes strode among crimson-clad negroes; Circassian slaves, veiled from forehead to toe, rode past in a cluster of black eunuchs with their long staves. Fair and indifferent Greek girls stood in the slave market under the insolent eyes of Turkish officers. Mamluks in jeweled *khalats* built themselves palaces of half-dried bricks in a month, and feasted on the carpets of slain enemies.

From this tumult Saladin held aloof. While he displaced the Fatimid officials with his own men—and gave the vacated palaces to them to plunder—he lived in a small house near the mosques. He discovered a great library within the city—120,000 volumes—and while he had some of the manuscripts sent to his own house, he entrusted the mass of them to a

distinguished man of letters, the kadi El Fadil, thereby making one firm friend for life.

He gave up wine and sports, and settled down to a routine of labor. At sunrise he rose from his mattress and washed his face and hands before making the dawn prayer. After his servants came in to salute him, the new wazir ate a little fruit washed in clear water. His sleeping mattress was rolled out of the way, and he held a morning *levée*, listening to the reports of his officers and the complaints of the mullahs and merchants of the city. When they had taken their leave, the young Kurd went out to make his daily inspection before the heat grew too great.

At such a time he became a stately figure—a slender man, erect in bearing, with quiet, meditative eyes. He wore a black *tarboush*, or long fez, wrapped round with a white turban cloth, and a black cloak, its wide sleeves trimmed with gold thread. Into his girdle was thrust a long Arab scimitar with a gold or jade hilt. His horses were the best of the Arab thoroughbreds, their reins and headstalls heavy with silver or gilt coins. About him clustered his guards in yellow cloaks. Before him went riders beating upon silver kettledrums, and black Sudanis running barefoot, who cried,

"'Way for the Conquering Lord, the favored of Allah!"

For the East demands splendor in its masters. And the throngs that salaamed to Saladin or ran beside him to beg would have drawn their knives to loot him if for one moment he had relaxed the rein of authority.

But that moment did not come. Ayoub gave him wise counsel, and Shirkuh's mamluks transferred their allegiance to him. One of them, Karakush by name, knew all the arts of fortification, and planned with him, after a devastating earthquake, a new citadel on the spur of the overhanging hills. They meant to run a wall from the city to the citadel, and all the way down to the Nile.

All Saladin's kinsmen rallied to him—Taki ad Din, his nephew, a youthful and warlike soul, leader of the wild horsemen of the north, and Turan Shah, his brother, an experienced man but uncertain and overrash.

And Nur ad Din, the sultan, sent him congratulations with

fresh troops and suggestions. The conquest of Egypt delighted Nur ad Din, who wished to have the kalif of Cairo deposed, after which Saladin was to march to aid Nur ad Din to overthrow the crusaders.

Saladin, however, did not obey at once. He knew that Nur ad Din had one foot on the edge of the grave. If he left Egypt to its own devices and joined the sultan, he would become an officer of the army again, with others more than ready to take his place. So Ayoub and Saladin played their parts in a real comedy. When Nur ad Din was far in the north with his army, the young Kurd would march against the salient of the crusaders, raiding the castles of the knights down in the desert. The sultan, hearing of this, would hasten back joyfully to aid him, and Saladin upon one pretext or another would decamp and recross the sands to Egypt.

The comedy did not long deceive the astute sultan, and rumor said that he meant to come in person and dispossess the young master of Egypt.

Saladin assembled his small council to discuss the situation —sitting down by Ayoub on a carpet with the leading amirs, the officers of the mamluks, and his own kinsmen. He asked them what they would do if the sultan, Nur ad Din, marched on Egypt.

"When he comes," cried Taki ad Din, "we will give him battle and drive him from the land."

The others assented, saying that they had eaten the salt of Saladin. But Ayoub lifted his gray head angrily. "I am thy father," he said, "and here is Al Harimi thine uncle, and for the rest, I am certain of their loyalty to thee. Who would wish thee better than we?"

"I am sure of that," Saladin assented.

"Well," Ayoub went on, "by God, if I and thine uncle should see the sultan Nur ad Din, we would lower our heads and kiss earth before him. If he orders us to cut off thy head with a saber stroke, be sure we will do it. That is how we are. And these others—if one of them saw the sultan Nur ad Din, he would not dare to remain sitting in the saddle. He would get down to kiss the earth. All this country is the sultan's

and if he wishes to name another in thy place, he will do it, and we shall obey his commands!"

All the officers of the council cried assent, saying that they were the slaves and mamluks of the sultan. Saladin dismissed them, and Ayoub, when he sat alone with his son, said bitterly:

"Thou art a fool, an idiot! To bring together all these men, and tell them what thou hast at heart! When Nur ad Din learns of thy plan, he will march to attack this land, and thou wilt not have one of these men to defend it. Nay, more —some of them will write to him concerning thee. Write thou also, saying, 'Why march against me, to bring me to obedience? For that, it will be sufficient to take a towel and pass it around my neck.' When he reads thy letter, he will put aside thinking of thee, and will occupy himself with the more important matter of his kingdom—so thou wilt gain time. God is great and all-wise!"

Ayoub had spoken the truth. The Egyptian army was loyal enough to the young Kurd, but the appearance of the great sultan in the field would cause a general desertion. Saladin realized this. He gave an order that took a good deal of courage.

When the multitude gathered in the great mosque on the following Friday for prayer, the mosque was as usual, the unlit lamps hanging from the lofty ceiling, the carpets clean and brushed, and the very shadows inviting meditation. But when the preacher advanced from the alcove to the carved wooden steps of the *minbar*, there was a turning of heads and the sound of heavy breathing. Attentive eyes saw that he was clad not in the customary white but in the black of the orthodox preachers—even his turban was black, and about his hips a sword had been girdled, as in the days of Muhammad and the Companions. Thrice he paused in his ascent of the steps to strike the sword sheath upon the wood for silence, but there was no need of that.

He lifted his long arms, and his voice echoed against the high arches. "Blessed be the Companions, the Followers, and the Mothers of the Faithful . . . and the kalif Al Mustadi!"

The prayers went on, after an instant of amazement. For

the preacher had invoked the name of the kalif of Baghdad, in the great mosque of Cairo, within an arrow's flight of the palace where that other kalif, the Fatimid, lay behind his curtains. Saladin had virtually dethroned the kalif of Cairo, thereby making a host of new enemies for himself. But he had made his own position clear. He was a follower of the lawful kalif of Baghdad, and acknowledged no other lord.

By the same stroke Saladin gained possession of the kalif's treasure—gold and silver ingots ranged along the walls as high as the ceiling, with caskets of matched pearls and great, uncut precious stones almost beyond the counting. As well as the famous enamel peacocks and a leopard made of ebony spotted with pearls. With this trove in his hands, he could set Karakush to work in earnest, taking massive stones from the pyramids to build the new walls, and an aqueduct to bring good water from the hills, and a dam to keep out the stagnant river water. As Nur ad Din had done in Damascus he planned an academy for the men of letters, and a hospital.

He appointed over it [said an Arab from Spain, who saw it years later] a man of knowledge with a provision of drugs. In the chambers of this palace couches have been set, with bed clothes and servants who inquire into the condition of the sick morning and evening. Opposite this hospital is another for the women. Adjacent is a spacious court where the chambers have iron gratings for the confinement of those who are mad. He himself investigates everything, verifying what is told him with the uttermost care.

Meanwhile his court was growing. Moslems went rar to seek out a man who had been fortunate. Fatalists, they believed that achievement came only from the will of God, and a man who had achieved much was beyond doubt favored of God.

The kadi, El Fadil, was now administrator in general. New figures appeared at Saladin's side—a certain Hakhberi, an old Arab jurist, and Aluh, the Eagle, who was poet, astrologer, and debater in one. Saladin liked to listen to their talk. But he was careful to send Turan Shah afield to search for a

place of safety into which they could retreat if the sultan marched against them. Turan Shah rode up the Nile, only to return disgusted with tales of half-naked blacks who laughed when he spoke to them. He fared better when he explored the Arabian desert.

But Saladin had no need of this *pied à terre*. Sturdy Ayoub could counsel him no more—the old Kurd, riding recklessly through a gate of Cairo, was thrown from his horse and killed. Amalric of Jerusalem followed him to the grave. And in the act of preparing to invade Egypt, the sultan Nur ad Din died.

This was in 1174. The embryo empire of Damascus cracked into fragments under the hands of the leading amirs of the army. And Saladin, after a survey of the situation, took upon himself the task of keeping the dominion intact, himself to be the sultan. Undoubtedly he was the man most fit to succeed Nur ad Din. And to this task he brought all his quiet patience, as unbending as tempered steel.

VIII

THE PATH OF WAR

It is clear that Saladin planned the jihad from the first. He knew that only in the jihad, the holy war, could he unite the factions of the Near East. Turkoman, Kurd, and Arab would follow the standards to war against the unbelievers; the atabegs, of the north, the shaikhs of the desert clans, and the amirs of Egypt would ride to such a summons—given the sultan to lead them.

He wrote to the kalif of Baghdad, recalling the many times in which he had opposed the crusaders, and pledging himself to the holy war that would free Islam from the invaders. He had already united Cairo to Baghdad; eventually he would regain Jerusalem.

But twelve years passed before the victorious Kurd was able to declare the jihad.

Twelve years of almost ceaseless campaigning and siege and pacification. "Only a hand that can wield a sword may hold the scepter," said the proverb of Islam. And Saladin had need of all his tact and clear judgment to weld together the fragments of Nur ad Din's dominion.

In this time he never rode willingly to war against Moslems, but he never failed to take up the sword when other

means failed. "Shed no useless blood," he told his sons in a later day, "for blood never sleeps. Win the affection of your subjects."

Damascus opened its gates to him, but the atabegs of the north defied him in his homeland, and the sultan of Mosul in the east supported them. They were sturdy and fearless—the best of the Turkish horsemen. We find him surprised by them in the prairies by the Horns of Hamah, and again trouncing them in the red wheat fields within sight of Aleppo. We see him throwing off the cloak of intrigue and openly declaring himself sultan of Syria. The kalif acknowledged him as sultan, and sent him the black war banners of Baghdad.

Meanwhile he roused against him a dangerous enemy. In clearing out the underworld of Cairo, he annihilated the lodge of the Ismailites, the free-thinkers who acknowledged the authority of no sultan. When the Ismailites stirred up the Sudanis to revolt, Saladin scattered the rebels and crucified the leaders, nailing them to the city gates. This brought down upon him the anger of the Assassins, and the order went forth to slay him.

The first attempt failed, owing to the vigilance of his guards. Saladin went his way undisturbed.

It was his custom to bar no one from his tent, and one day he was visited by the veiled figure of a little girl, who revealed herself as the daughter of Nur ad Din. Saladin greeted her with his customary grave courtesy and asked what gift she would have from him.

"The city of Ezaz!" she cried.

And the sultan bestowed upon her without hesitation a city that had cost him a trying siege. Generosity was instinctive with him, and a chronicler relates sadly that he would make gifts of all the horses in his stables, until even the one he rode was promised to someone else.

Here also Saladin, sitting alone in his tent, was visited by other guests. Three Assassins gained the tent and flung themselves at him. The rearmost of the three was swept from his feet by the sword of an outer guard. The sultan warded off the dagger of the first, and moved aside. A knife blade struck

against the steel of his headpiece, wounding him slightly. Before the drug-crazed youths could get in a deadlier blow, the sultan's swordsmen were upon them. Thrown down and disarmed, they were carried off to be tortured into confession and then hewn apart.

"They were sent," his soldiers told Saladin, "by the *Shaikh al jebal.*"[1]

This second attack was too much for the patience of the sultan, or the endurance of his officers. The whole army was mustered in ranks and every man who could not be vouched for was dismissed. Then the army got into the saddle and marched into the mountains of the Assassins, to the west of Ousama's old home, between the long valley of Hamah and the sea.

Here in the pine-darkened uplands the half-wild cattle grazed among the sandstone ledges, and isolated on the summits the castles of the shaikh loomed against the clouds. Saladin's horsemen ravaged the valleys thoroughly, driving off the cattle, and making their way down to the edge of the foothills where stood a yellow castle with sixty-foot walls, rising from an outcropping of solid rocks above the clay huts of a village. This was Massiaf, the stronghold of the Assassins in Syria.

And the grand prior of the order in Syria was Ruckn ad Din. It was said of him that he never left the walls of Massiaf by day, and that he had the power of going and coming through any obstacle. His followers believed that he was more god than man, since he had never been known to eat, drink, sleep, or spit.

The great stones of the castle, fitted together without cement on the elevation of the rock, defied the sultan's siege engines for a week. Accounts differ as to what happened then. One version has it that Saladin awakened to find a dagger thrust into the earth by him, and a scroll bearing this message:

"*What thou possessest shall escape thee in the end, and return to Us.*

[1]The master of the Assassins, called by the crusaders the Old Man of the Mountain.

"*Know that We hold thee, and will keep thee until the account be closed.*"

Saladin's guards then surrounded his pavilion at night with a solid ring of men, and scattered flour outside the tent cloth. On the following morning the sultan was unharmed, and no human visitor had been seen. But in the white flour lay the mark of feet entering and leaving the tent—feet that pointed outward, coming and going.

By this time the sultan's officers were in a mood that verged upon homicide and panic at once. They were not reassured by a message sent down from Massiaf in quite an earthly way, by a paper tied to an arrow.

"*Knowest thou not that We go forth and return as before, and by no means mayest thou hinder Us.*"

After that few slept the night in peace within the lines of the sultan's army. Men whispered that Saladin would die if he did not withdraw from Massiaf by the end of the week. And, true to his promise, they beheld the master of Massiaf depart from the castle in the night, through all of them.

A blue light glowed upon the dark battlements and descended to the rock, fading and springing up anew in another place. Arrows were shot at it, and torches swung in vain. Like a changing will-o'-the-wisp, the blue light darted among them and vanished at last toward the hills.

So runs the tale. All that is certain is that the grand prior pledged Saladin immunity from the weapons of the Assassins, and the sultan on his part withdrew from Massiaf at the end of the week. Thereafter the men of the mountain did not molest the sultan, nor did he invade their country again.

Damascus saw in the son of Ayoub a protector and a patron. The sultan had left El Fadil and Karakush in charge of Egypt and spent much of his time in the gardens of the river city, where the scholars flocked in a body to his sitting place, and men rode in with petitions to offer. For the word got about that Saladin would send no one away without a gift. His officers defended him as best they could from the beggars, but Saladin smiled.

Once he noticed that his treasury was full, and ordered Mukaddam the treasurer to give out money to the lords, soldiers, and servants.

"I remember, O my Lord," Mukaddam observed, "when Nur ad Din sat where you now sit, he also bade me empty the coffers in gifts by fistfuls. 'Fill your hand,' he said. But when I grasped the first fistful, he restrained me. So, if you give—do not give to all."

"Avarice," Saladin smiled, "is suitable in a merchant, not a king. Give out the money with *both* fists."

When he was afield, Damascus listened to the tidings that came in by camel rider and pigeon post. The city rejoiced when Aleppo and the north yielded to him at last, and it lamented loud when the sultan, crossing the lands of the crusaders with his army, was assailed suddenly by the Christian king while the men were getting over a stream. The brief fight was deadly, and the Moslems, although much more numerous, were broken by the charge of the mailed cavalry—only the devotion of his bodyguard saving the sultan, who had to flee for hours at the full speed of his horse and make his way back to Cairo in the rain and chill of winter.

It was a costly lesson, and Saladin did not venture again imprudently across the border. Damascus rejoiced when word came in that he had avenged his defeat in battle with the crusaders, taking seventy captives, among them some of the great lords.

After this, in the year 1180, the sultan agreed to a truce with the crusaders, while he arranged the affairs of his new empire. He dreamed of a widespread peace between the rulers of Islam—himself and the sultan of Mosul and the Seljuk sultan far to the north in Asia Minor. War, to him, was a task that every ruler must undertake; but he had no pleasure in war, and he looked ahead to a lasting peace.

To gain this, he meant to rally all his strength and move against the Christian crusaders when the two years' truce expired. He would drive them from the coast of Syria into the sea and regain Jerusalem. This would be the jihad, the holy war, and in it the men of Islam would find themselves united.

During the interval of quiet he assembled his forces. And at this time, among the petitions that were pressed upon him, he found a salutation that was like a voice from the past because it had been written by the aged hand of Ousama, who had lost all his lands and lived now upon charity.

May Allah grant long life to our master Al Malik an Nasir Salah ad Din, Sultan of Islam!

For his mercy made a way for me from the country where I lived separated from him, no longer having fortune or children. He had me brought to his noble court. In the greatness of his soul he raised up the old man who, without him, would have been raised up by no one.

Out of his generosity, he rewarded me for services to other princes —and so carefully did he take account of those services, he might have been a witness of them. His gifts were sent to me, to my house, while I slept, so that I need not rise to receive them. Now have I honor again, that time had taken from me.

He, the sultan, has on his part restored the tradition of the great sultans, and has built up the column of the dynasty. By his sword the empire has become an impregnable fortress.

Glory be to Allah, Lord of the Two Worlds!

It was summer in Cairo, and the dust haze hung over the gray river, when the sultan mounted his horse, and gave the signal to lift the black banners. Ragged fakirs thronged about his steel-clad mamluks, crying joyfully. And the merchants locked the bazaar gates to go and stare at the armed men who were setting forth upon the jihad—the Path of God. They saw that a handsome Kurd, a nobleman, held the stirrup of the sultan—Al Adil the Just, the brother of Saladin. Turan Shah lay in his grave, and Taki ad Din was off in the north, gathering the contingents of war. Karakush, disconsolate, came forward to kiss the stirrup and take his leave—for he would stay in Cairo, to raise the foundations of the citadel now taking shape on the brown hill above them.

The cool north wind breathed through the alleys and stirred the black folds of the banner. The mamluks trotted between the palaces, and drums echoed the murmur of the

multitude. Saladin settled his yellow cloak upon his shoulders and looked about him.

"O King," voices cried, "O Bringer of Victory . . . In your shadow we live!"

A slender poet pushed his way to the sultan's stirrup, bent his head and chanted a verse of salutation and leave-taking.

"*Taste well the joy of the flower of the Nejd*," he sang. "*For after this night, no more will it flower for thee.*"

And the multitude was silent, hearing in these words an omen, like the chill breath of the sea that crept into the warmth of the sun.

IX

EXILES

Sun burned upon the gray stone roofs. The wind beat at the stone walls, and the wind came from the desert. In its dry touch lay fever and restlessness. It passed over the city, over the hills of the Promised Land.

Men turned away from it, as if the desert wind had been an enemy. The blood throbbed slow in their bodies and they sought the shadows, away from the sun and the hot breath of the sky. Only in the narrow Via Dolorosa some heedless pilgrims knelt.

A horseman paced through the shadow of the covered market street. He wore a long loose robe of white samite, and a skull cap on his shaven crown; his rough beard fell to his girdle, from which hung a long sword. On the breast of his robe was embroidered the great red cross of the Temple. A group of long-haired men-at-arms pushed past him, talking loudly in Norman French and staring at the gold trinkets in the booths. At a stand of perfumes a lady's page sniffed and argued with an impassive Armenian over a copper coin. Beside them a black-robed monk felt judiciously of a leg of lamb and shook his head, while the bare-legged native boy holding the basket behind him yawned.

From a money changer's stall came a babble of voices, Greek and Arabian, and the *clink* of gold coins being tested by clever fingers. A cavalcade of black goats, on the way to the Butchery, stopped to sample tempting sugar cane, and galloped off under the legs of the Templar's charger, which paid no heed to them.

Not until the shadows filled the streets of Jerusalem did people venture out. Horsemen moved toward St. Anne's, where by the sunken pool, under the sycamores, a wedding party was assembling, and the bright satins of nobles mingled with the softly gleaming silks of their ladies. They waited by the dark green water that once an angel had troubled, until bells chimed and a young girl passed between them, her rigid head upholding a gold coronet, and her long train of cloth-of-gold reflecting the last glow of the sun, raised from the dust by the hands of solemn children. A turbaned Moslem, a wayfarer from some unknown place, gazed at her curiously, until she disappeared within the pointed arch of the entrance. Bells chimed above the sycamores and the high voices of children answered them. Alone by the water, the wayfarer leaned on his staff, wondering perhaps at the strange Nazarenes who never veiled the faces of their women.

Vesper bells rang out over the roofs—from the tower by the Sepulcher to the Basilica of Sion. Sheep crowded through a narrow gate where spearmen idled. A boy passed among the sheep, tugging at the hand of a bearded man, upon whose shoulder lay the hand of another who led in turn a third and fourth, their faces raised to the evening sky—blind men who had come to pray for a cure at the Rock of Calvary.

Not until the dusk deepened did the king come out upon the open gallery of his manor, beside the Tower of David. He was alone. And even so, he wore a veil over his head. He moved like a man in pain, sitting upon a bench, his hands hidden in his sleeves. Men waited within sound of his voice, but he did not call them. For he was the son of Amalric, Baldwin, by grace of God sixth king in the holy state of Jerusalem. Young he was, and since childhood he had been a leper.

Baldwin the Leper, they called him—the last of the male line of Godfrey and the first Baldwin. Valiant the spirit that endured the growing pain, without respite or hope—cherishing, like a dream, the memory of that day when he had been still sightly, and had led out the Templars from Ascalon, to fall upon the array of Saladin and drive the Moslems before him. He had been sixteen, then. And now, six years later, he could not go to the wedding of his sister.

He would have no children. What then of Jerusalem? The care of the future lay upon him, and his days were numbered. For sixty and five years no foeman had dared march against Jerusalem. The precious wood of the true cross rested within its gold casing, safe in the sanctuary of the patriarch; the crosses of pilgrims covered the rock of Calvary, where candles burned by day and night, and the reading of the service of the Lord went on without ceasing. Would it ever cease?

Baldwin had the pitilessly clear mind of the maimed. And he loved Jerusalem. He knew every one of the gnarled olives of Gethsemane, and the stones in the dry bed of Kedron; he had watched the sunsets darken against the western height while the bells tolled.

Jerusalem was still as it had been; the pilgrims thronged with candles to the altars. But Baldwin dreaded the future, and what might come to pass after his death. Why had the great churches been so avid of land? They held fields and villages, and every sacred place, and they drew tithes from the men of the land, but they paid nothing in return. The king himself had less than the abbot of Sion.

The pilgrims came, and prayed and went away. But the lords of the Holy Land must protect Jerusalem, and last year there had been a near-famine.

In Europe, so travelers said, they were building high cathedrals, carrying stones on their backs by torchlight, while the good people sang. The kings of Europe were growing in power—but where were they, and their men of arms? They did not come beyond the sea to aid the king of Jerusalem.

Why had the churches at home sent out guilty men, to do penance by the voyage to Jerusalem? Criminals and felons, adventurers and landless men came now beyond the sea.

Italian merchants owned half the coast ports. All wore the crusader's cross. But they did not come on crusade. Instead they sought spiritual salvation, or profit for their purses.

And Baldwin, in his pain, was filled with a doubt and a foreboding. He had ordered his sister Sibyl to marry, so that there would be one to take his place upon the throne.

Alone he waited, listening to the distant bells. Alone, he brooded, while the veils of darkness closed in upon the gallery and its garden and his face that must never more be seen.

Spring came early to Galilee in that year of our Lord 1183. Blue grass flowers covered the hollows, and the fishing boats went out with their nets. Black cattle wandered down to stand in the water and drink; white hibiscus bloomed in the shelter of the walls. Light clouds drifted far up, above the gleam of the lake sunk between the green heights.

To Raymond, third count of Tripoli and prince of Galilee, it brought new care; for in that spring the truce with Saladin expired, and Raymond was commander of the mailed host of Jerusalem. He had come with his lady and his minstrels and his knights to the great castle of Tiberias, above the shore of the lake, the castle of black basalt seamed with cement. An iron citadel, stretching forth its courtyards and towers, down to the edge of the water where the fishing nets dried.

Raymond lingered at Tiberias, because here he could watch the blue hills in the east, and the roads. Islam ruled the East, and the road from Damascus wound south of the lake. Over this road, guarded by Tiberias and the lofty castle, the Star of the Winds, Moslem horsemen would ride before long, he fancied.

His people had full joy of the green spring. Girls and esquires rode afield, galloping over soft cotton fields, laughing in the shade of the pomegranates, while troubadours sang the new fable of Aucassin and Nicolette:

Nicolete o le gent cors,
Por vos sui venuz en bos . . .

They carried their falcons on embroidered gauntlets, over the breasts of the hills, while men-at-arms clattered behind

them. They rode under Tabor's round summit, seeking for traces of fallow deer, while their dogs gave tongue. The gray monks of Tabor looked down at them, and ragged *fellahis* leaned on wooden hoes to watch. They were gay in their long bright mantles, and they rode the Arab pacers with a loose rein. For they were the youth of the land, the young blood of Outremer. They had been weaned in Beyond the Sea, where a dozen peoples served them. Merchants from Baghdad brought them linen sewn with pearls, and jeweled saddle cloths.

The hot sun had darkened their skin, but they cared not for that. Among the girls were to be seen the brown eyes of unknown Armenian mothers, and the broad, full cheeks of other Greeks. But this was Beyond the Sea, not Normandy.

They had never seen the smoke-stained halls of Christendom, or the dark, damp woodlands where the sun was cold. Embroidery stands, and dull Latin texts and heavy black dresses would have amused them—for they had scores of Syrian girls to embroider for them, and courteous Arab gentlemen to doctor them, and the wide fields to pleasure them.

. . . Bel compaignet,
Dieus ait Aucassinet.

So the troubadours sang when the hunt was ended, and they sat at meat on the terrace, outside the square castle keep. Bright and fair was the starlight over Galilee. Raymond the count sat in the high place, fondling the greyhound beside him. The slim esquire leaned over his shoulder to fill the wine goblet as soon as it was empty. He liked the strong red wine of the country, or the full flavor of the Cyprus grapes. Greek wines were better than mead or muddy ale. Impassive natives held spluttering torches high, and the feasters could not see the stars.

The elder ladies had been to the wedding at Jerusalem, and had many a tale to tell. Who had ever heard of a wedding in Paques, with barely a week's time to summon the nobility? And in a small church instead of Sion! The bride had entered alone. Sibyl carried herself well—no one could say nay to

that. She had a man's daring, and Jaffa and Ascalon for a dower. She knew her own mind—although she had obeyed the king, her brother.

Why had she made such a choice? With all the lords of Outremer looking at her like amorous shepherds—they *did* hope to be the chosen one—she took a newcomer for her husband. A handsome fellow with an empty mind, a landless knight of Poitou—Guy, brother to Amalric of Lusignan who is constable of Jerusalem. Amalric of Lusignan at least had a sword; but Guy had only fine eyes and a manner. Was it true that he had been banned from home for the slaying of a duke?

Of course Guy had been devoted to the young countess, a widow and comely. The women of Ascalon said that Sibyl gave herself to him before now. She is young and most secretive.

And Amalric looked black as thunder. The poor king, of course, is troubled, and would give much to undo what is now done. . . .

So the talk ran on, for in Beyond the Sea it was a notable event.

Raymond and his court sat long over their wine, in the hot night when the torches had been sent away, and the women had retired with their talk and their hidden fears. So his ancestor, Raymond of Toulouse, had reveled in joyous Provence a century ago, before the Provençals had taken the cross and fared forth to Beyond the Sea. And the Provençal men never loved brooding, or nagging cares. A song was better, wine was better.

For five years Raymond had been a captive of the Moslems, and wine could not efface the memory of that. Raymond hated inaction. He knew himself to be the most capable leader of the mailed host of the Christians. He had the courage to strike, and the wisdom to avoid a trap—and he knew the Moslem method of fighting. But the Templars who held the frontier castles disliked him, and now the sister of the king had married a man who would be pushed forward by his enemies.

He had feuds on his hands, with the reckless Reginald,

lord of Kerak, and the Templars. Here in the hot lands, where the sun drained strength from them, the crusaders turned to hazard and revelry to pass the long hours. Hard riding and hard living shortened their years and tempers. But they would rally, Raymond knew, to the king's summons to war. If Baldwin had only been a whole man, or if Guy of Lusignan had been a brave man!

What would Saladin do? Where would the wind blow next —or the wolves of Lebanon hunt? Raymond could do nothing but wait, chained to his castle, pacing the rampart along the lake, while his lady slept and the young girls and the esquires dreamed of hunt and fable and shadow plays.

So there was no peace in the mind of Raymond, prince of Galilee, who could not sleep in these fair nights of spring. Tranquil were the waters of Galilee, and clear the star gleam upon them. But over his head rose the mount with the ruins of Herod's palace, above the caves where the hot sulphur water trickled out of the ground. Beyond the broken palace with the mosaic floors wound the road to Armageddon.

Raymond had emptied too many goblets in these hot nights, and had looked too long into shadows. He, too, had his dreams.

In the heights above the sunken lake a strange company was gathering, to a ghostly trumpet call. Were there not ghosts upon the ground of Armageddon? Surely the pavilions of Holofernes swayed, when the desert wind breathed upon the heights. The ghosts knew the death song of Saul, and the rumbling chariot wheels of Pharaoh. *They* had heard the thunder tread of the elephants of Antiochus, and the steady tramp of the mailed legions of Rome.

The road had known them all. And the beat of the hoofs of the fierce horsemen out of Arabia. They were coming again, these ghosts—they were there now, waiting upon the heights.

X

SALADIN PAYS A VISIT

THAT summer the worthy William, archbishop of Tyre, wrote patiently in his chambers by the new cathedral where the sea lapped ceaselessly against the walls. Several pages he added to his *Historia Rerum in Partibus Transmarinus Gestarum*. He told how the Christian host assembled slowly at the rendezvous near the village of Saffuriya to meet the expected onset of Saladin, and how Baldwin the king had himself carried thither.

It happened while our people waited at the wells of Saffuriya. The king had a fever at Nazareth which grieved him much. Besides, his leprosy so enfeebled him that his body could no longer aid him. Sight left his eyes, and his hands and feet began to shred away. So he could no longer govern the kingdom and attend to its needs. Yet no one wished to bid him withdraw himself—for, although weak in body, he was great in courage and vigorous in enforcing his will.

None the less when the fever gripped him so hard he made the barons come before him, and named Guy of Lusignan, count of Jaffa and of Ascalon, of whom I have spoken before—who married his sister—he named him bailly[1] of the kingdom. But he insisted

[1]Governor.

that while he live, no one else should be crowned king, and he kept for himself the city of Jerusalem.

Many were angered at this thing the king did, some because the count was placed at the head of the lords of the land, others because they despaired of the kingdom under his management. Still others said that he would do well, and defend the kingdom. Among the common people there was murmuring and complaint, and a saying—"Many men, many minds!"

This Guy began to act without wisdom and was very proud and vainglorious of this bailly that he had; but he did not have long joy of it, as you shall hear.

While this went on and the Christian host waited at the wells of Saffuriya, suddenly Saladin entered our lands with great companies of his men, well mounted and armed. He passed below the sea of Tiberias[1] into the plains of the Jordan and sent his foragers out on all sides.

They came to Bethsan and found no one there. So they took all the food and furnishings, then tore down the fort and went away.

Our barons heard where they were. Saddling their horses and covering well their bodies with armor, the barons arranged themselves for battle as had been agreed, and advanced with the true Cross going before. If our Lord had not been angered at His people for their sins our Christians would have made a great overthrow of the enemy, for they had thirteen hundred knights and sergeants well mounted. Of footmen there were fifteen thousand.

They passed the mountains where lies Nazareth, the city of our Lord, and descended into a plain that was called in old time Esdrelon, whence they hastened by rapid paces toward the well of Tubania where Saladin was quartered with so many men that they covered the whole country. They hoped to have a great contest with the enemy, but Saladin broke camp and went away, and left them the fountain. He waited, a thousand paces away.

One part of his horsemen arrived at Petit Gerin and took it by force. Another sally of the Turks brought them to a castle called Forbelet, which they gained by force and took all that they found within—men, animals, and other things. The third company of Saracens advanced directly toward the host of our men. They kept so near to us that no one could go out upon the road for any need without being slain.[2]

[1]The Lake of Galilee.

[2]The army of Jerusalem had intrenched itself around the wells, lacking a leader who could plan any course of action. It must be remembered that the Moslems had perhaps six horsemen to one mounted crusader.

Some of them climbed upon Mount Tabor and did that which had not been done before; they demolished an abbey of the Greeks who were of St. Helena, and took all that they found within. Another company of Turks went off to the mountain where lies Nazareth, and climbed to the heights from which they could look down into the city below them. When the women and the children and the weak people saw them so near a great many were frightened and began to flee into the cathedral. The press was so great at the entrance that some died there.

The host of our barons was so hemmed in on all sides by the enemy that no one dared leave it, and no one could go to it with provisions. From this it happened that a great famine began, and many endured misery, especially the foot soldiers and the peasants and the Genoese and Venetians and others from over the sea who had left their ships in port and had come up to aid us, with the pilgrims who were awaiting the October passage home.

When our barons saw the great suffering of the people, they took counsel, and ordered the baillies in the neighboring castles to send them in all the food that could be had. They did this willingly. A large part of our knights went to escort the food. One party of them foolishly wandered, and fell into the hands of the enemy. These also had dire need of food, so that which they seized comforted them the more.

It seemed to those of us who knew war that the Turks were well on the way to suffer a great damage. But a hatred and a covert envy came between the barons, who neglected the war. They had such dislike of the count Guy of Jaffa, who was a stranger and neither a wise man nor an able knight.

For eight whole days the Turks laid waste the land without hindrance, while our men did nothing. On the eighth day Saladin led his men back into their own land.

So William of Tyre wrote, and he did not add that for the first time an army of crusaders had remained passive in the presence of a weaker host of Moslems who had withdrawn unmolested.

The discord in the army convinced Baldwin, who had wished to abdicate in favor of Guy, that he must find someone else to take the reins of command. Pain-racked and solitary, he was still the king. He named Raymond of Galilee regent of the kingdom, and called upon the patriarch of Jerusalem to divorce Guy from his sister Sibyl.

This the patriarch would not do. Baldwin then cried that he would summon Guy to trial for divorce, and when the new count of Jaffa and Ascalon fled with his wife to his city of Ascalon, the king had himself carried thither in a litter.

But the gates of the city were closed against him by Guy's order, and Baldwin, climbing from his litter in his gray robe and veil, limped to the gate and beat upon it with his fists. A voice called to him to go away, and the leper crawled back to his litter. He could do no more.

William of Tyre censored the barons of the land with harsh words. The men, he wrote, had become no better than the infidels. "There is not a chaste woman in Palestine." But the fault lay with the leaders, not with the men.

True, they had changed in the ninety years of their dominion. They had talked with the learned men of the Arabs; they had lived within the throng of the priesthoods of elder Asia—the Nestorian hermits, and the silent Armenians, the Coptic monks in their white cowls. Maronites and Jacobites had come to pray at the Sepulcher once the way was clear.

The crusaders had learned that Antioch, not Rome, had been Peter's city. They had wondered why the priests showed them Calvary and the rock within the wall of Jerusalem, and not upon a hill outside the walls. They had tilled the land of Israel, to sow their barley and maize and lentils, and had labored with the natives to ward off famine, while the churches of the Holy Land lived upon the tithes they paid, and the alms from Christendom. The churches, waxing wealthy, had not the same influence as before.

William of Tyre knew that Heraclius, who was now patriarch of Jerusalem, had a great treasure in his coffers, and a hand greedy for gain. Heraclius was no scholar, and he was given to lust, and men had made a song about his "Madam Patriarch"—who had been a tavern singer.

But these matters the good archbishop did not see fit to write. He was well aware that the lands which did not belong to the churches were passing little by little into the hands of the great military orders, the Temple and the Hospital of St. John. These servants of the Holy Land had become in a way its masters. They held all the frontier castles except

Tiberias and Kerak, and they were answerable only to the pope, in Rome. Culprits against ecclesiastical law could take refuge with them, and be safe.

With no able leader to meet the danger of a general Moslem war, the defense of Jerusalem rested upon the castles. These, except for Banyas, by the springs of the Jordan, and Castle Jacob at a ford below Galilee, were intact. Some of them had just been finished—for the task of shaping the great stones and hauling them to the heights took years. And Saladin had stormed castle Jacob in a week.

The archbishop believed the castles would hold out. They gripped the heights of the Holy Land, from Dan—which was Banyas—below Beersheba. Their walls circled the towns. Tyre itself was a citadel of the sea. These citadels lay within a day's ride of each other—some of them no more than walled villages with a massive square tower, and others like the great Krak of the Knights—called the Flame of the Franks by the Moslems—circling, with huge double walls rising from a great talus, the summit of a hill. Krak of the Knights was the headquarters of the Hospitalers, up beyond Tripoli. A thousand horses could be stabled in the corridors of the inner work, and five thousand men could take shelter there. Its round towers were citadels in themselves, with gates, engines, covered passages, and lookouts a hundred feet in the air. No siege machines could break through the sloping talus built upon solid rock, and no siege towers could be advanced to the walls because of the talus. The Hospitalers had learned their art of fortification from the Byzantines, and their Krak was twice the size of Coucy or Pierrefonds, the largest castles of France.

Many of these citadels, standing like white monuments upon the high crest of the ridges, could signal to the others at night. All of them had water stored in cisterns, or a covered way going down to a great reservoir. Unless surprised, they would inevitably withstand a Moslem attack until the main army of Jerusalem could come up to relieve them. For each one had its scores or hundreds of men of arms, skilled in raid or siege. And if the Moslems passed by the castles, they must leave a greater force to watch the garrison.

No Moslem army would dare penetrate to Jerusalem leaving the network of castles intact behind it. Even Saladin, who had struck glancing blows along the line from south to north, could not hope to surprise the castles, which all had outpost towers on the lower slopes, and guard posts along the roads.

William of Tyre wrote the last words in his history—troubled words. For Baldwin, the dying king, had asked him for proof that life endured after death, and the shocked prelate had replied with long and logical arguments. But Baldwin had doubted, and so the leprosy had defied all the prayers of the churchmen. And the archbishop William saw in the imagined heresy of the knights the cause of the trouble that beset Jerusalem—the lack of sons in the royal line, and the growing power of the Moslems. So the doctrine of his faith had taught him to reason.

He put aside the parchment pages of his book, and said farewell to Tyre. With other envoys he took ship for Christendom, to visit the courts of the kings of France and England, to plead for aid for Jerusalem.

Beyond the blue haze of the gorge of the Dead Sea, beyond the bare line of Moab's height, and far beyond sight of the watchers in Jerusalem, lay the farthest castles. Kerak of the Desert—Stone of the Desert—and the white walls of Mont Réal rising over the green of olive trees, and Ahamant standing above the Valley of Moses.

Fertile was the earth here, with its groves of fig and pomegranate trees, and its shadowed springs. And the castles stood guard at a kind of desert crossroads, where the Pilgrim Road ran south toward Mecca, and the caravans from the east turned off to go to Egypt. So these outpost castles had been verily a stone in the throat of Islam. Nur ad Din gnawed at them fretfully, and Saladin struck at them his swift, unseen blows. But still they stood, and just now they housed a wolf. The Arabs called him Arnat.

"Arnat was an old man most skilled in waging war, with great fortitude of spirit," they said.

In his youth, he had been Reginald of Châtillon-sur-Marne.

From there, he had followed the path of war with a heedless daring of his own. Many a time had he awakened under a burning roof, or set a torch to the roof beams of an enemy. Faithless in most things, callous and indifferent to death, he went his way in a grim fashion—sword slayer, and brigand when it suited him, with the single virtue of courage and the gift of winning the loyalty of men. We first hear of him stealing a bride and making himself lord of Antioch. But Antioch, still splendid, had fallen under the influence of the Byzantines, and when Reginald of Châtillon—now of Antioch—attempted to seize the imperial island of Cyprus, he was smitten down and forced to hold the bridle rein of a Byzantine emperor. Then, in the Moslem war with Nur ad Din, he was taken captive and held for fifteen years. When the wolf became free at last, he was given the fief of the Stone of the Desert, the barbican of the Holy Land and the point of greatest danger.

Perhaps only Reginald, of all the souls of Christendom, would have dared the unthinkable. No sooner had Saladin announced the jihad than Reginald went off to attack Mecca, to destroy the sanctuary of Islam.

He built ships on his mountain summit, in pieces, and carried them on camel back, escorted by friendly and mystified Arabs, across the sands to the northernmost point of the Red Sea. He painted the galleys black and put them together while he besieged the port of Aila; and his two galleys cruised south, utterly unlooked for, down from one white-walled sea village to another, taking rich spoil along the sea that had been a Moslem lake for five hundred years—and still is.

No chronicler has recorded the year-long jaunt of these crusaders who appeared in their mantles and mail in the track of Islam's pilgrims.

"It was like the coming of the last Judgment," an Arab historian says. And for a space utter amazement paved the way for the doomed men. They camped in mud villages under palm groves, coming and going from their galleys while the season's pilgrims scattered to the inland hills. Then retribution overtook them. Saladin was in the far north,

but Al Adil, his brother, launched a fleet from the Egyptian side, and pursued. How the battles were fought for long weeks, we do not know.

Once the crusaders were within a day's march of the holy city of Medina. And near there, they were cornered.

We pursued them, until not one of them was to be seen or heard of. All that crowd of infidels was sent to hell. We made a hundred and seventy prisoners.

At least two of the captives were sent to Mecca, to be slain before a multitude on the day of sacrifice in the near-by hills. Others were brought back in triumph to Cairo, bound upon camels and donkeys, sitting face to tail.

The stories they told us of their hardships and exploits almost burst our hearts with astonishment. . . . The sultan ordered all of them to be beheaded. Not one man was left to relate again his adventure or to point out to others the route of the Red Sea, that impregnable barrier between the infidels and the sacred city.

But the Moslem chroniclers were mistaken. One man had escaped, and Reginald of Kerak came back to his castle, where he abode in quiet for a while, as a crippled wolf licks his wounds.

His spirit had not altered, and he lost no time in raiding the caravans that stole past his stronghold.

That year a wedding was held in the wolf's lair. The young knight Humphrey of Toron—son of the old Humphrey of Toron, who gave the accolade of knighthood to Saladin, the legends say, twenty years before at Alexandria—took for his bride Isabel, the younger sister of Baldwin the Leper. He was a man of honor, born of the highest lineage of Jerusalem. And she also was young and of a proud family. Only that much is certain. Why they were married in that distant Stone of the Desert, among the dour swordsmen of the lord of Kerak, we do not know—except that Humphrey was a kinsman of the wolf of Kerak. Reginald summoned all the minstrels from Beyond-Jordan, and killed a dozen sheep for

the wedding feast. The Arabs of his village climbed to the mountain, to watch the fires and to listen to the singing. Before midnight the bride and the groom had been escorted to the small tower in the center of the five-hundred-yard enceinte when the darkness became alive with other sounds—the roaring of drums and the clashing of cymbals, the ringing of steel against steel, and the battle shout "*Yahla 'l Islam, Yahla 'l Islam!*"

Saladin had come up, unseen during the feasting, to exact retribution for the Mecca raid. His soldiers stormed the outer wall, and drove the Christian swordsmen headlong through the wide enclosure, past the magazine and reservoir to the moat of the castle keep.

But the crippled wolf was not to be taken. Reginald and the bulk of his men got across the drawbridge over the chasm that divides the citadel from the outer work. Saladin stormed the remainder of the enceinte and set up his siege engines across the moat from the keep. But when he learned that he had interrupted a wedding, and that the two lovers were quartered in one of the towers of the keep, he ordered that no stones be cast against their tower.

And Reginald sent out to him meat and wine from the banquet board, and a message of regret that he had lacked time to prepare more fitly for his distinguished, unbidden guest.

Saladin's engineers settled down to work the engines and pound at the isolated citadel. For a month or more Reginald held good his keep—until Raymond, his feudal enemy, crossed the Jordan with the army of Jerusalem to his relief.

Then Saladin, who was not in strength, withdrew to the north. But not before Raymond had come into his camp to talk with him, and had agreed—as the sultan also agreed—to a five-year truce.

The young prince of Galilee saw in the truce the best safeguard of Jerusalem. Saladin wished it for a reason of his own. He had subdued the restless north, but Mosul in the east troubled him, and he had to keep Taki ad Din with an army to safeguard Aleppo. This prevented him from using his full strength against the crusaders, and he planned to extend his

rule over Mosul and the great mountain region of Irak before making his real effort against the Christians. So he departed from the frontier, early in the year 1184.

In the next year died Baldwin, king of Jerusalem, with no one to succeed him.

XI

A KING IS CROWNED

For a year no one walked in the gallery, under the Tower of David in Jerusalem. The crown of the kingdom lay in the sanctuary of the patriarch, while noblemen, priors, and grand masters came and went. And the talk in hall and monastery grew hot and fierce. Many of the peers claimed the regency for the young Raymond, while others argued that he had made an unworthy truce with the sultan.

The patriarch listened to them all, and especially to De Riddeford, the master of the Temple. Sibyl had all the pride of her birth, and a will that could overleap the obstacle of a weak husband. She was the sister of the dead king, and she claimed the throne by right—by the old feudal right.

Others opposed her, saying that Guy was not worthy to wear the crown of Baldwin. Raymond of Galilee became the leader of this party, who wished Isabel and Humphrey of Toron to succeed to the throne. Many of the barons gave allegiance to the young Isabel, but her husband respected the

old feudal right, and would make no move on his own behalf.

No one kept watch for Saladin, for the tale came down from the north that he was sick unto death, and—living or not—the pledge of his five-year truce would stand. Then Reginald of Kerak rode in to Jerusalem, and armed Templars sallied out from their quarters in the white palace that once had been a mosque. A cavalcade of spears from Ascalon entered the gates at night, and in the morning the gates of the city were in the hands of Sibyl's supporters.

Heraclius, the patriarch, saw this, and agreed readily that feudal right should be maintained. A procession formed between curious throngs and climbed the narrow street to the churche of the Sepulcher. The white surcoats of the Temple and the gray coats-of-arms of Kerak surrounded the pale Sibyl and the silent Guy, and the procession filed into the door of the Sepulcher, into the deep shadows where candles flickered between marble columns, and black-clad priests stood at the door of a closed tomb. By the altar Heraclius in full robes lifted a vial of ointment and a crown, and his voice echoed under the dome.

". . . Prelates, seigneurs, bourgeois, and you, the people who are assembled in this place—we make known to you that we are here to crown queen the lady Sibyl, countess of Jaffa and Ascalon, and we wish you to tell us if she is to be truly the queen of the kingdom."

Thrice the patriarch asked the question, and thrice the murmured answer was "Yes." But when the ceremony was at an end, and the time came for Sibyl to rise from her knees, she lifted the crown from her head, and placed it upon her husband's, saying, "Thus now do I, Sibyl, bestow upon thee, my husband, the crown of the kingdom." And, taking his hand, she led him to the high seat of the cathedral.

And Amalric, the constable, hearing of his brother's coronation, said, amazed, "Faith, if they have made him a king, they should make me a god."

Isabel, the sister of Sibyl, cried out against it, but Humphrey of Toron, a good knight and a man of easy mind, would take no stand in the matter, and men fell away from Raymond, who alone defied the authority of the new lord of

Jerusalem. It was said that Raymond went then to Saladin and did homage to the sultan.

Months passed, and Reginald of Kerak found the truce irksome. Raymond had made the truce, not he, and the prince of Galilee was in disfavor. When the great Moslem caravan from Cairo camped under his castle with its multitude of slaves and tempting bales of goods, the master of Kerak could not hold back his hand.

He led down his followers, and seized the caravan and held it, in spite of Saladin's instant message of protest, in which the sultan claimed the caravan as his own, under the safeguard of the truce. Reginald's answer was to sally out against the long caravan of pilgrims coming back from Mecca, and Saladin's patience snapped.

"If the Lord wills," he cried, "I shall slay that man with my own hand."

By now Saladin had recovered from his illness, and his work beyond Mosul was done. For the first time he mustered the levies of the far lands—the distant Turkoman clans and the Kurds of Irak.

"To fight for the cause of the Lord was with him a true passion," his chronicler said. "He spoke of nothing else; he thought of nothing but war and engines, and occupied himself with nothing but his soldiers. He was content with the shade of a single tent."

Something of his enthusiasm animated the new levies, who marched with him down to the Jordan, while Taki ad Din, with a corps of veteran cavalry, maneuvered about Antioch to hold the Christian forces of that city aloof from the gathering host of Jerusalem. Then, in June of the year 1187, Taki ad Din hastened down to join his uncle, and the black banners of the sultan crossed the Jordan at the ford just below the lake of Galilee. This time there would be no drawing back, for Saladin was determined to break the strength of the crusaders and drive them from the Holy Land.

It was the *ban* and the *arrière ban*—the king's summons for lord and vassal and peasantry, for the castle guards and crews of the ships. They plodded along the roads toward

Saffuriya. Gallants of Tripoli, adventurers from the sea, the spears of Tyre, and the close-drawn ranks of the mailed Templars—young esquires from the halls, with flowers in their mantles, and the memory of farewell smiles tugging at their thoughts—grim knights from the Watchers, and brown, pagan Turcoples who wasted no thought on the causes of war. Toward the meeting place they moved, through the white dust of the dry season.

In the shade of the road shrines they sat by the wells; they emerged from dry wadies, and filed out of cattle paths. They slept in the churches or marched under the cool stars. Knights of Jerusalem, escorting the gold standard of the cross, rode by the black-garbed Hospitalers, climbing the slow road around Carmel's height where the monks prayed, up to the highlands, to Saffuriya where the wells were the last wells. Beyond Saffuriya the bare plain rose to the hills of Galilee, without river or well.

At the camp of Saffuriya the great lords waited in their pavilions. Raymond found no sleep in the hot nights—for his wife and his castle of Tiberias lay down behind the hills at the lake, where Moslem horsemen rode. Reginald of Kerak chafed at the waiting. They had made up their quarrel at the meeting place, for this was the rallying of the mailed host in time of need, and personal quarrels must be put aside. Humphrey of Toron was here, and the brave Balian d'Ibelin, with Amalric the Constable, and the quiet, stubborn officers of the Temple.

The days passed and they waited, while scouts brought in word of the Moslems. Saladin had led his last contingents across the Jordan, and was camped along the heights by Galilee, facing them, but fifteen miles away. Saladin had a great host with him, twenty-five thousand horsemen, and they were waiting also. Their pickets were within sight. Saladin could not move upon Jerusalem while the Christians watched at Saffuriya. He could not get past them, to the coast. So the two armies rested, full in their strength, alert and wary, while the days of June ended.

Then Saladin sent a division back, into the depths of the lake shore, to attack Tiberias. The outer town was stormed

in a day, and Raymond's wife with her scanty garrison penned in the castle.

That night the lords of the Christian host gathered in the pavilion of the king, to decide what they must do. Gravely spoke De Riddeford, master of the Templars: "We can not, in honor, hold back while the castle is taken, within our reach."

Reginald of Kerak added his voice to the master's. They looked then to the king. "I have no will to press the war," he said, with hesitation.

Raymond spoke then. "Can you not see what lies before you? O my comrades, not little is the peril in which we stand from this man Saladin."

And he explained that they would find no water in the advance against the Moslems. It would be better to let Tiberias fall, let his wife be taken, than to risk an advance. If they held their ground, the Moslems must withdraw or lose the advantage of position. Many agreed with him, while the younger knights and the reckless lord of Kerak urged an attack, reminding the council that Raymond had once made a private treaty for peace with Saladin. In the end the council decided not to march forward.

But that evening De Riddeford and Reginald of Kerak went to the king's tent, and persuaded the irresolute Guy to order an advance at dawn.

So the banners of the host moved out over the plain, and the chivalry of Beyond the Sea went into battle for a point of honor.[1]

[1]The Moslem chronicles relate that Saladin's amirs advised him at this time not to risk a battle but to withdraw and lay waste the lands of the Christian lords until they scattered. Saladin answered: "And when will such a gathering be gathered together again in one place before us? Nay, be ready to lead your men. God will do what He wills."

XII

HATTIN

The Christian leaders marched at dawn, the second day of July, hoping to reach the Moslem line at noon, and break through before darkness. They knew the Moslems held the brow of the great descent toward Galilee, six hundred feet below the level of the sea. If the Moslems could be broken and thrown back, they would be hurled down the descent upon the walls of Tiberias. As for the numbers of the Moslems, the old wolf of Kerak laughed—"The more the wood the greater will be the fire."

The sun, however, held a fire of its own, and the marching columns lagged. They were twenty thousand men of all arms, and for the greater part experienced in war. They were ready for battle. But most of them marched afoot, in mail and carrying water. Under their feet the gray rock ledges burned with the intolerable heat of the sky overhead, and red dust choked their throats. Their feet climbed long slopes, and stumbled down into brush-filled gullies. Although the knights rode back to urge them on, they lagged.

When the sun went down they were still far from the Moslem lines. The leaders called a halt and the men camped

and drank thirstily, and slept while mounted patrols watched. But Raymond could not sleep, knowing that they had ventured too far, and yet not far enough. They could not turn back, in the face of the Moslem horsemen; they had left the springs of Saffuriya, and on the morrow they must reach the water of Galilee.

"Lord, Lord!" he cried. "Already is the battle lost, and we are dead men."

Before the first light the olifants sounded, the horses were saddled, while the spearmen and archers looked to their weapons and sought their ranks. As they pushed forward the sun blazed red in their eyes, and when the heat struck into their limbs they drank the last of their water, throwing away the empty skins.

Ahead of them drums throbbed and cymbals clashed. They saw dark masses of horsemen moving out to the flanks, under the black banners and the green banners of Islam. The dry earth burned their feet, and the chaff of trampled wheat rose about them in the air that quivered with heat. Sweat dried on their skin, and the iron weighed upon their shoulders.

The wild Arab clans surged through the veil of dust, and the first arrows flashed while a roar of voices answered the drums:

"Yahla 'l Islam—Yahla 'l Islam!"

The light of the sun glowed on the gold casing of the cross, raised above their heads.

The sun set at last and dusk crept across the glare of the sky. No wind breathed upon the dry breast of the earth, with its trodden wheat and dusty, brittle tamarisks.

On knolls and rock ridges the crusaders sat or lay, without light or water or food. A murmur went from mass to mass of them, where hoarse voices whispered and cracked lips prayed, and the wounded moaned in vain for water. The saddles were not taken from the sweat-stained horses. Broken spears lay upon the ground, and knights sat silent among peasants.

They had fought through the day, knights and archers and spearmen. They had moved forward a little. But they

had not broken the line of the Moslem horsemen. So they waited in the hours of darkness by their dead, racked by thirst and weariness and ebbing hope. The last of their water was gone, and their leaders could do nothing more for them.

"In that place," the Moslem chronicler says, "the Angels of Death kept watch that night."

Lights flickered and tossed around the mass of crusaders, where the cavalry patrols hemmed them in. For Saladin had extended his line to close them in. They heard the chanting voices of the Koran readers, and the eager shouts of men who had water to drink and hope for the morrow.

"*Allahu akbar—allah 'l allahu!*"

With the dawn the Christians took up their weapons and came on again. "They advanced," the Moslem chronicler adds, "as if driven toward certain death."

They did not move with raised lances and firm ranks, the men on foot supporting the horsemen. Instead, they trampled through the dust clouds, pushing silently toward the cool gorge of Galilee, clearly to be seen but beyond their reach. For the fever of thirst raged in them, and on that fourth day of July they fought like the specters of men, toward the hope of water and life. The struggle raged in the village of Loubiya under the rocky hillocks known as the Horns of Hattin.

In this struggle, the foot became separated from the horse. The knights, deprived of support, made vain charges into the solid array of the Moslems, already tasting victory. Horses fell under the deadly arrows, or sank exhausted, and the chivalry of Jerusalem was forced to stand to defend itself, drawing more and more into a dense circle, cut off from the men-at-arms who scattered in groups on rising ground.

Only Raymond of Galilee was able to lead some scores of riders in a desperate charge that broke through the Moslem lines. He rode on a spent horse back to the coast.

By noon of this last day of the battle, the remaining lords had gathered about the king and Reginald of Kerak on the knolls of Hattin, where the gold cross gleamed. Surrounded and ceaselessly beset by Saladin's cavalry, they held their

ground, wielding sword and battle ax, until the brush around them was set on fire by the Moslems.

When the smoke thinned and drifted away, they threw down their weapons, and sat down where they had stood, without strength to do more. Their bleared eyes saw the cross lowered by a Moslem hand.

"Of all who had come hither, only the captives were left alive."

So the chivalry of Jerusalem came to its end, and the battle of Hattin ceased.

Nothing remained of the army of the crusaders.[1] It had been the *ban* and the *arrière ban*. All the able-bodied strength of their kingdom had marched out of Saffuriya, and had ceased to be, there in the red fields above Galilee. Nothing was left, except the dark bodies lying in clumps like fallen stacks of wheat, while the Moslems stripped them of stained and dusty weapons. Except the captives, in torn shirts and bloodied leather jerkins, staring voicelessly at the Moslem horsemen.

Perhaps a few scores of mounted Turcoples had found a way from the battlefield, or some wearied stragglers still hid in the gullies. Raymond reached his castle in Tripoli and died there two weeks later of exhaustion and a broken heart.

That evening the last cavalry of Taki ad Din came in from the pursuit, and dismounted in a tumult of rejoicing, where the Turkish swordsmen were cutting the heads from the Templars who had survived the battle—some two hundred of them. It was the rule of the Temple that no member of the order might ransom himself. And the Moslems treated them without mercy, except for the master, De Riddeford. The grim warrior-monks knelt under the sword strokes without protest or prayer for mercy. The law of Islam required that before an unbeliever was put to death, he should

[1]Historians, reading the pages of William of Tyre, have explained the disaster by saying that these men of the army of Jerusalem were degenerates or weaklings compared to the earlier crusaders, and so were defeated where the others gained victories. That is not so. These men did not lack courage, or experience. They were badly led, and they were opposed by a united army of Islam superior in numbers, and ably commanded by Saladin.

be offered the chance of acknowledging the faith of Muhammad, and if he accepted he should be spared. But the Templars made no reply to the contemptuous question, and the swords fell.

When the last wearer of the red cross lay on the ground, Saladin rode to his camp—where his servants were setting up the great pavilions joyfully. He stopped where the kadis were gathered about the gold casing of the cross, shining in the torchlight. This was the emblem of the crusaders. It had gone before them in battle from Ascalon to Hattin.

For nearly ninety years they had prevailed. Nur ad Din had dreamed of their overthrow, but in two days Saladin had put an end to them. What conqueror of Asia had tasted such a victory? Not Xerxes and not Mahmoud. The Kurd in Saladin exulted in the triumph of his clans; the scholar in him pondered the meaning of the triumph; and the devout spirit of the conqueror felt in this sudden, bewildering achievement an omen of greater things. Unless God had willed it, the fate of Hattin would not have befallen his enemies.

Before his tent Saladin listened to the exultation of his officers. Courteous Adil, his brother, came forward to congratulate him; impetuous Taki ad Din chanted a song about the battle, and the Arab chieftains beat their hands in response. Indeed and indeed, Saladin was the king, the Victory Bringer.

What followed is related by the chronicler:

Saladin held an audience in the vestibule of his tent—for it was not yet put up. The warriors came to claim his favor, presenting to him the prisoners they had made, and the chieftains they had identified.

The tent was finally in order, and the sultan seated himself there happily. He bade them bring in the king and his brother[1] and the prince Arnat. Then he offered a sherbet of chilled rose water to the king, who was overcome by thirst. He only drank a part, and offered the goblet to the prince Arnat. The sultan said at once to the

[1]Guy and Amalric of Lusignan, who were the king and the constable of Jerusalem. Arnat was Reginald of Kerak.

interpreter, "Remind the king that it is not I but he who gives drink to this man."

For the sultan had adopted the praiseworthy and generous custom of the nomads who granted life to a prisoner if he ate or drank of that which belonged to them.

Then he gave order to lead the three to a place prepared for their reception, and when they had eaten, he asked for them to be brought in again. Only some servants were then with him. The king he made to sit in the vestibule; he required the prince of Kerak to come in, and after reminding him again of the words he had spoken, he said, "I am he who will serve Muhammad against thee!"

He then inquired if the prince would embrace Islam, and on the man's refusal, he drew his sword and struck him a blow which severed the arm from the shoulder. At this the servitors sprang upon the captive, and God sent his soul to hell.

They drew his body out, and cast it into the tent entrance. The king, seeing in what fashion his comrade had been treated, believed that he would be the second victim, and he shook in all his limbs. But the sultan had him brought in and calmed his fears. "Kings," he said, "have not the habit of slaying kings, but that man yonder had passed all limits."

XIII

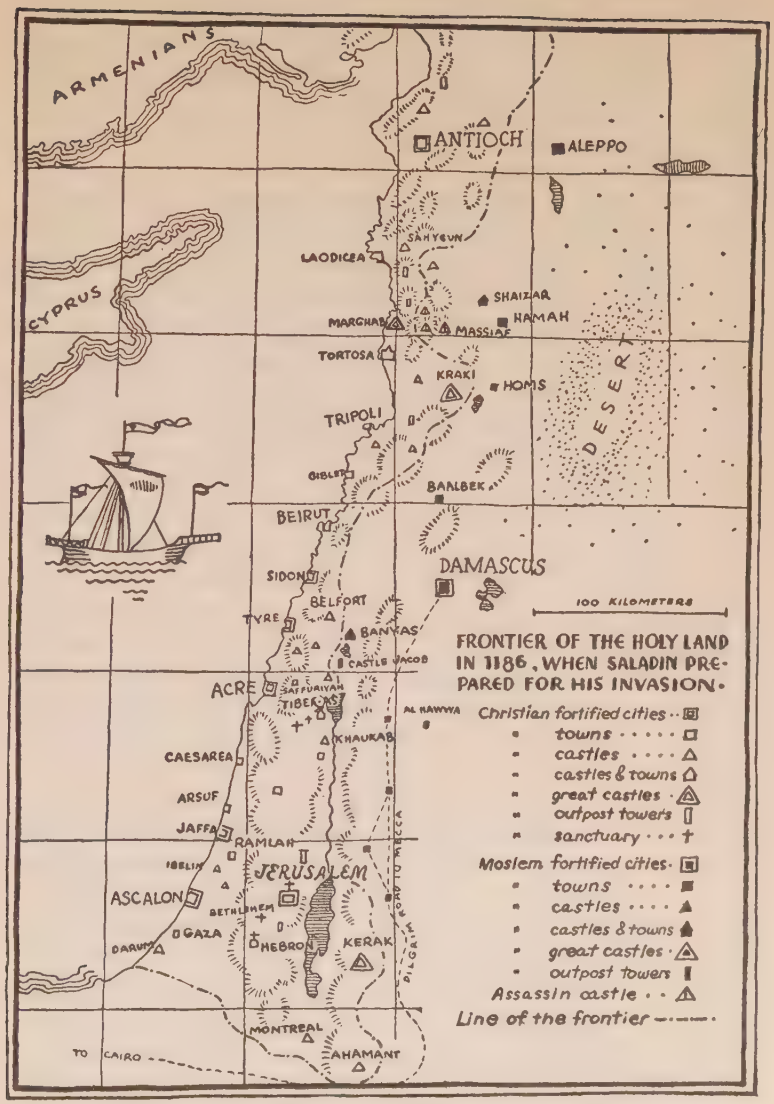
JERUSALEM

The citadel of Tiberias was surrendered by Raymond's wife the next day, and Saladin placed his prisoners under guard in that town. And he made ready to take full advantage of the extraordinary situation.

His army was almost intact, the men eager to be led on. Elsewhere the Christian strongholds were just beginning to hear the terrible tidings of Hattin. More than that, the great citadels were now held only by skeleton garrisons. Their feudal lords—almost without exception—had been slain or taken at Hattin. Saladin wasted not a day in deliberation. He brought his army down to the coast, thus cutting the lands of the crusaders in twain—separating north from south.

He struck first at the strongest of the coast ports, Acre. With what siege engines he had been able to carry on camel and mule back, he prepared to attack the walls; but Acre, with only a handful of soldiers, opened its gates and the sultan was well pleased to grant it generous terms.

Then he divided his host—since no army could possibly be mustered to threaten the Moslems—and sent the divisions headlong over the country, under Al Adil, Taki ad Din, and the other amirs. He himself cleared the mid-region between


ARMENIANS
ANTIOCH
ALEPPO
SAHYOUN
LAODICEA
CYPRUS
SHAIZAR
HAMAH
MARGHAB
MASSIAF
TORTOSA
KRAKI
HOMS
DESERT
TRIPOLI
GIBLET
BAALBEK
BEIRUT
DAMASCUS
SIDON
BELFORT
TYRE
BANYAS
CASTLE JACOB
ACRE
SAFFURIYAH
TIBERIAS
AL HAWWA
KHAUKAB
CAESAREA
ARSUF
JAFFA
RAMLAH
IBELIN
JERUSALEM
ASCALON
BETHLEHEM
GAZA
DARUM
HEBRON
KERAK
PILGRIM ROAD TO MECCA
MONTREAL
AHAMANT
TO CAIRO
100 KILOMETERS
FRONTIER OF THE HOLY LAND IN 1186, WHEN SALADIN PREPARED FOR HIS INVASION.
Christian fortified cities
towns
castles
castles & towns
great castles
outpost towers
sanctuary
Moslem fortified cities
towns
castles
castles & towns
great castles
outpost towers
Assassin castle
Line of the frontier

Acre and Galilee, taking possession of Haifa, Saffuriya, Nazareth, and Caesarea to the south. Then he moved north, and took the surrender of lofty Tibnin, while his advance was preparing the siege of Beirut, at the foot of the red hills of Lebanon. Sidon yielded to a passing summons, and Beirut—a walled city without a fortress—surrendered after an eight days' siege.

Swiftly Saladin detached garrisons to hold the captured places. The people of the towns he let go where they willed. Without their fortresses the bulk of the Christians were helpless, under the swords of his horsemen. His soldiers snatched up all provisions and weapons and precious goods, but the sultan would not delay for any seeking of spoil. He wanted to add Tyre, lying behind its walls out in the sea itself, to his conquests, but Jerusalem was his goal, and thither he went on the heels of Malik Adil, who had stormed Jaffa. Tyre could be attended to later.

By the last of July Saladin was camped in the sands before the great wall of Ascalon, which had refused to surrender. Ascalon, sheltered behind its twelve-foot curtains and square towers, was the main port of the south, as Acre had been of the center of the Holy Land. From it ran the caravan route to Egypt. The Moslems called it the Bride of Syria, and Saladin would not leave it unconquered. While he prepared to besiege it, he sent for Guy of Lusignan, who had been its lord.

When the captive king appeared, the sultan offered to release him if he secured the surrender of the city. Guy was led under the wall to talk to the garrison, but could not prevail upon the defenders to open their gates. So the Moslems drew the siege lines tighter, and sent detachments to subdue the country between there and Jerusalem.

Here the Christians still lingered in the little hill towns, by their shrines and churches—all of them who had not taken refuge in Jerusalem. Down by the sea Gaza and Darum yielded to the sultan's summons. Defense was hopeless, and Ramlah gave up its keys, while the Moslem banners were carried into the church over the tomb of St. George.

Within the foothills, the strong castle of Ibelin surrendered

after bargaining for the release of its beloved lord, young Balian. Almost within sight of Jerusalem, the towns of the monks yielded—Bait-Jebrail, and Bait-Laim, that the crusaders called Bethlehem. And, isolated, without hope of aid, Ascalon asked for terms on the fourth of September.

In two months Saladin had swept through the whole of the Holy Land that had taken the crusaders so many generations of effort and bloodshed to subdue. True, in the east several of the giants of the frontier still remained intact on their heights. But the Moslems held all the country behind them, and, cut off from the sea, their fate was only a matter of time. They were summits that had escaped the sweep of the flood and the men isolated within them could not venture out.

And Saladin's thoughts were bent on Jerusalem, where lay the Al Aksa, the third sacred place of Islam, and the gray rock from which Muhammad had ascended. Jerusalem would be the fruit of his conquest—the true reward of the almost unbelievable good fortune that had befallen him.

On the twentieth of September his army camped on the western height opposite the Gate of David.

A few days before, Balian d'Ibelin had reined his horse through the same gate. The young baron found himself the only noble within the city of all those who had gone forth to Hattin. The queen, Sibyl, waited there in the palace, with her sister Isabel—their quarrel forgotten in the calamity of the kingdom. There too waited Heraclius and the abbots of lost churches, with the refugees from a dozen towns. But no knight skilled in arms until Balian came.

Anxious women thronged the narrow streets. Cattle crowded the fields by the Butchery. Mules and led horses filled the chambers under the Templars' quarters, where the chargers had been. Boys, gray priests, and Syrian Christians —long-robed merchants, haggard pilgrims, and voiceless widows waited in the courtyard of the Sepulcher, while prayers were uttered ceaselessly. Only a scattering of armed men gathered on the tower summits, or walked moodily through the alleys.

And they all besought Balian to take command of the de-

fense. They had not seen the red fields of Hattin. Their thoughts could not grasp the reality—that the armed host did not exist any more. In some way a miracle would aid them, and Jerusalem would not be taken from them. Balian d'Ibelin must show them how to defend the city!

He told them that he was no more than a prisoner released on his oath never to bear arms against the sultan. He showed them that he wore no sword. They pressed around him, and would not leave him, and in the end he yielded to them. A knight, raised to arms, could not stand apart while common people fought.

All this he wrote in a despairing letter to Saladin, asking in the same moment that the sultan would seek out and safeguard his wife and children. In time the answer came, that Saladin understood and would protect his family.

Meanwhile Balian did what he could. He assembled the few score men trained in arms. He knighted, without ceremony, some fifty youthful esquires and sergeants. With the money of the churches he bought pikes and crossbows and shields for the hundreds of peasants and pilgrims who were able to handle them. He knew well enough that no miracle would save the city by aid of such men, but he had cast in his lot with them, and he did what he could. At least Jerusalem would not fall without a blow struck.

Meanwhile Saladin and his amirs had studied the western wall, and found it too strong to be assailed. As the first crusaders had done, eighty and eight years before, he moved his camp to the high ground opposite the northeast angle of the city. Here the siege engines were set up, and a barricade raised along the ditch to protect the miners who set to work to dig under the foundations of the wall.

The unskilled garrison had no proper engines to break down the barricade, and their counter-mines fell in. They manned the summit of the wall and plied their bows, but the veteran mamluks and Turks made no attempt at first to storm the gray stone rampart. Instead, the miners enlarged their tunnels, propping up the foundation of the city wall as they dug beneath it—until the props were burned and a broad section of the wall cracked and fell in.

For this moment the Moslem swordsmen had waited, and while the drums roared they swarmed up into the breach, to be met by arrows and slingstones and javelins.

"I will take Jerusalem as the Christians took it," Saladin had said, "sword in hand."

The Moslems gained the breach and held it, fortifying it for their next effort. And that night a kind of miracle happened. While the priests and women marched in procession through the streets chanting the *Miserere*, the armed men, led by the knights, surged out, with the battle cry of the cross.

"God wills it."

They drove the besiegers from the breach, and when the next day had passed with its din of weapons and outcry of the wounded and the maddened men, they still held fast in the breach, against the stones and shafts from the Moslem engines.

And they sent out envoys to Saladin, saying in the exultation of the hour that the men of Jerusalem had pledged themselves not to survive the loss of the city. They would slaughter the horses and cattle, and pile the furniture in the churches. They would set torches to the wood and burn the churches, with their altars and vestments and relics. Women and children would be put to the sword, and then the men, priests and warriors, would sally out to find death in their turn.

While Saladin pondered their words, the patriarch Heraclius sought Balian d'Ibelin within the city. "It is not well to destroy ourselves thus," he said. "For every man of us fifty women and children would be lost. Nay, it is better to yield the city and betake ourselves to Christian soil."

Balian listened and talked with the leaders of the men. The next day he went out under truce to confer with Saladin. What the knight and the sultan said is not known. Both were men of decision and they knew the plight of Jerusalem. The enlightened Moslem had no wish to lay the city in ruins, and he agreed to allow all the inhabitants to depart with arms and all possessions except money that they could take with them. But they must ransom themselves, paying ten

pieces of gold for every man, five for a woman, and one for a child. He agreed to conduct them to the coast ports.

And Balian, who could not have hoped for such leniency, accepted the terms.

The next days saw a strange sight. All the gates remained closed except the Gate of David. From this a ceaseless cavalcade passed out. Women, in traveling cloaks, laden with bundles, rode forth with their children, while servants dragged cattle and herded sheep beside them. Sallow Armenians rode out on donkeys, followed by their women. Barefoot monks came out, with lowered heads, marching after their superiors. Behind them the bells of the Sepulcher were tolling.

The men of Jerusalem came forth—seneschal and hermit, lord and beggar and peasant. Among her ladies, veiled before the insolent eyes of the Moslem warriors, Sibyl the queen appeared, with her sister and the widows of Hattin. Some went down the road silent in their pride, but others sought the sultan in a throng and fell on their knees to beseech that their husbands, the captives of Hattin, be released. A strange sight—the noblewomen of Outremer kneeling before a sultan of Islam. They did not beg in vain, for Saladin granted their plea.

All of them paid their ransom coins to the watchful officers, and Saladin, when the money was brought to him, gave it out to the Moslem soldiers.

The black robes of the sad monks filed past him, and the gray habits of the Augustinians. The patriarch Heraclius went out, with his private treasure hidden in the sacks upon his beasts. He carried out gold, although thousands of the poor remained weeping in the city. It was Saladin who released them—and who forbade his men to lay hand on the property of the patriarch—by announcing that those who had no money might pass out by the postern of St. Lazarus.

So the last of the exodus began, and the people of the alleys, with their rags and their sick and clinging children, passed across the stones of the Sepulcher courtyard, looking up at the silent bell tower and the arched gateways with their familiar stone figures. They looked back at the dome of the

Temple of the Lord, and as they left the gate, their hands touched helplessly the gray stones.

Upon the road they stood without knowing what else to do, until detachments of Moslem cavalry formed them into parties and set out with them toward the coast. No miracle had saved the city, but a strange thing had happened. For the Moslems had taken possession of it without blood being shed. And this had been brought about by Saladin's mercy.

On the hill beyond the gate the people of Jerusalem saw dark figures climb to the dome of the Sepulcher and wrench from it the great gilt cross, casting it down to the ground. A shout rose and swelled as surf beats against the rocks of a shore.

"*Allahu-akbar—allah 'l allahu!*"

It seemed to the world of Islam a portent and a sign from the Lord. Hattin had ceased upon a Friday, and Jerusalem had fallen upon a Friday while the true believers prayed. Couriers rode to the distant lands, crying out their message: "The praise to God, who hath overturned the pride of the Nazarenes by the sword of the king, the Victory Bringer!"

Already the learned men of Damascus and Cairo were assembling, with the kadis and the readers of the Law, to make the first pilgrimage to Al Kuds—The Holy. For that was their name for Jerusalem.

The men of letters wrote a paean of victory, and people made a song of the downfall of the Christians:

Their city!
Fallen is their city, into the hands of the true friends of the Lord. Fearful is their spirit, beholding before them only the Sword and the fire of Purgatory!

On the Temple enclosure thousands of hands were laboring at the Al Aksa mosque that had been for so long the palace of the Templars. The walled-up prayer niches were opened again, and the altar torn from the chapel. Mosaics upon the walls were whitewashed, and the heads smashed from marble images—since Muhammad had forbidden the worship of images. The stones were washed, and sprinkled with rose-

water. And in the corner toward Mecca a slender pulpit of carved wood was placed.

This had been fashioned by order of Nur ad Din, to be kept until it could be placed in the Holy City. And Saladin, remembering it, had sent for it from Aleppo. Around it clean prayer carpets were spread, and men hastened to wash their feet and kneel in this sanctuary redeemed from the infidels, while the caller-to-prayer ascended the bell tower from which the bells had been thrown.

Swarthy faces were lifted reverently, when the chant of the muezzin sounded over the roofs. Mailed figures gathered shoulder to shoulder, and brother smiled at brother.

O Dawn that has cast its shadows upon the unbelievers,
Shrouding them in eternal night!

O Dawn that has brought new life to Islam,
Shedding the radiance of everlasting day!

PART II

A SHIP *sailed into the west. A black sail hung upon the mast. Swift winds drove it over the deep water. In the drowsy ports, it left a message behind it.*

"Woe to Christendom! Jerusalem hath fallen. The Cross is lost and the host of the Cross is slain."

Upon the roads of the west the message went forth; swift horses clattered over bridges and over the sleepy autumn fields. Past hostel and hall the hoof-beat thundered.

Men gathered at crossroads, and before cathedral doors. In the twilight, over barren fields they came, to the lights of tavern and castle. In the darkness voices murmured, while the bells of the abbeys tolled and clanged. Woe to Christendom, to the wayward, the sinning. Woe to them who had lost Jerusalem, the glory of the world.

Beyond the sea the host of Anti-Christ had risen up; the banners of Satan had come out of the east, and the horsemen of Mahound had trampled the Holy City.

The voices murmured where the men gathered, and out of the voices grew other sounds, with the hush of prayers half said, of restless horses saddled, and unsheathing of sword blades and lifting of silent trumpets—sounds like the breaking of thunder far off, or the surging of surf against rocks. It was the voice of a multitude, rising over the lands, and it did not cease.

XIV

THE ARMY OF ISLAM

BAHA AD DIN was in search of a new patron. He had several gifts to offer. The whole of the Koran he knew by heart; moreover he could quote it on all occasions. Having been minister of Mosul, he could write messages of state perfectly, in a beautifully ornate style.

He was in the prime of life and his manners were beyond reproach. He wore a fur-trimmed *khalat*, with numerous undervests, suitable to the dignity of a kadi. A constant cough troubled him, and his legs failed him at times, but he had a good saddle donkey and a nimble mind. He wished for Saladin, for a patron—having negotiated in the past with the sultan on behalf of the princes of Mosul, and since Mosul was now at peace with the lord of Damascus, Baha ad Din sought his patron-to-be, with a propitiatory offering of a lengthy treatise on all the traditions of holy wars in the past.

Looking for Saladin in Damascus, in this spring of the year 1188, he did not find him. Saladin was afield again, up in the hills, with his household army. Thither went Baha ad Din on his donkey, and at the camp he sent in his treatise, and waited.

A mamluk bade him come to the sultan's pavilion, and the worthy kadi dismounted from his donkey where guards in yellow cloaks stood by their horses. Behind them baggage in hemp sacks and leather valises was piled, and bearded Arab servants ran about like laden ants. A dozen pavilions of heavy orange cloth, stained by sun and wind, sheltered a large official family—giant mamluk couriers, and tall secretaries who walked with a swordsman's swagger, elderly men in lawyers' turbans, and men with the brooding eyes of ascetics. Between the pavilion ropes sat, in voluminous robes, harsh-featured shaikhs from the desert clans, watching all that went on with shrewd eyes. White turban cloths of pilgrims nodded beside the green turbans of *sayyids* who boasted in full voices of the blood of Muhammad's descendants in their veins. Amirs in velvet *kaftans* and cloth-of-silver girdles stood impatiently awaiting an audience, while slaves bearing trays of fruit and sherbet hastened among them.

Baha ad Din knew many of the faces—young Aluh the Eagle, who made poems out of victories, and Imad ad Din, the great chancellor. He saw all kinds of men coming and going with petitions, heard them argue with harassed officers of the treasury. A noisy concourse, speaking all the tongues of Islam, restless and expectant, and thronging about the sitting place of the Victory Bringer. A mighty family, quarreling about trifles, as children quarrel, and waiting for fresh surprises and undertakings.

When his turn came, Baha ad Din was escorted into the vestibule. Here sat Turkish mamluks, beside hooded falcons on their perches. An old mamluk, sword bearer of the sultan, stood guard over Saladin's mail and the pointed helmet inlaid with gold arabesques. Another swordsman held back the entrance curtain for the visiting kadi, who put off his slippers and went forward over rich carpets. Reaching the massive tent pole, he dropped to his knees to touch his forehead to the ground, saying, "May God grant thee health, O King and Victory Bringer!"

"And upon thee, O Kadi, be the peace."

Saladin sat in the shadow of a small awning, with only a

physician and a cup bearer attending him. His thin face was darker than the short beard, already turning gray. Years of campaigning and sickness had taken toll from his body. His full brown eyes looked directly at Baha ad Din.

On his knees he had the bound pages of the kadi's book of the holy war, and of this he spoke—asking simple questions and listening with courteous pleasure to the answers of the learned man. They talked of the campaigns of Muawia and Khalid in the lifetime of the prophet, and of the meaning of the Path of God. Saladin sent his cup bearer for fruit and sherbet—he drank no wine—and so made Baha ad Din a guest of his tent. And while he talked he paid no heed to the din of voices outside the tent.

In this way began a friendship that lasted until the grave separated them. Baha ad Din had found his patron indeed. In his sultan he beheld a man patient and painstaking, slow to make decisions, but inflexible in will. A man whose quietude was a mask for a fiery passion.

Baha ad Din understood the spirit that could rally ten thousand men to a bloody charge, and in the next hour pore over the accounts of a common soldier to make certain that every dinar of the account was paid. Saladin obeyed literally the law of Islam; he gave his possessions to those who served him; he fought for the faith. His spoken word was inviolate, in all circumstances.

Ailing in body, he forced himself to endure the hardships of campaigning that tried the strength of healthy men. Unable to bear arms in battle, he haunted the front line of battle. The fear that he might, somewhere, fail in leadership troubled him. He was fifty-one years of age, and the fire that burned within him wasted him at the same time. Only in the talk of men like Baha ad Din and in listening to the reading of the Koran did he find respite. There was one small boy whose reading pleased him especially and he kept this boy near him at all times.

To the warriors of Islam he seemed to be an alchemist, at whose touch victory came to them. But the observant Baha ad Din saw how Saladin's steel-like will held together the restless masses of men and gained the victories.

In the last autumn, after the fall of Jerusalem, Saladin had led the army back to Tyre, saying, "Only this place, Tyre, remains to the Franks on the shore. Here they can rest. If we take this, they will despair and we shall be safe."

During the siege of Jerusalem, however, two things had happened. A new leader had appeared among the crusaders, sailing down from Constantinople, and putting in at Tyre when he found Acre held by the Moslems—the silent bells and the disordered shipping at Acre arousing his suspicions. "For," said Baha ad Din, "he was cunning as a wolf, and redoubtable in war."

He was Conrad, son of the marquis of Montserrat. And he had taken command at Tyre, strengthening the fortifications and digging a wide ditch across the great mole that joined the city to the shore.

Also, men had come to Tyre from the other places that surrendered to Saladin, who allowed the garrisons to depart unharmed if they made terms. This policy of mercy had resulted in quick surrenders of the castles—which might otherwise have been held to the last—but it had enabled Conrad to muster a strong force in Tyre.

And the great ramparts had withstood the battering of the Moslem engines, until the rains had come in December and Conrad's galleys had sunk five of the Egyptian ships blockading the port. By then Saladin's amirs had become discouraged. They had longed to go home with their spoil for the winter months, and the spring planting—customary with the Moslem troops. They had fought without respite for more than a year and Saladin had given them leave to go, against his better judgment.

He had dismantled his engines, and retired to Damascus, only to take the field again in the spring—to menace the castle called the Star of the Winds, and to press north toward Tripoli with his household troops. These were the veteran mamluks of Cairo, and the clans in his own pay. The regular army, as it might be called, included also the warriors in the pay of the treasury, Turks for the most part.

The greater part of his host was made up of the contingents led in by the princes of outlying places—the African coast,

Irak and the Aleppo, Mosul, and Hamah regions. These, as well as the roving Arab and Turkoman clans who served for the pleasure of fighting and the chance of plunder, could only be called forth after the crops were planted. So, in June of the year 1188, Saladin had less than half his host assembled, and contented himself with raiding the districts of Tripoli, without assaulting the mighty Krak des Chevaliers that crowned the hills of the Tripoli road and was the key to that city. From the double ramparts of the Krak, the black-robed Hospitalers looked down on his tents—the fortress was their headquarters. They had not suffered as much as the Templars at Hattin, but they did not dream of taking the field against the sultan, even when the first fleet bearing crusaders from over the sea arrived off Tripoli, under command of William of Sicily.

And Saladin made one of the sudden moves that left his enemies bewildered. Turning his back on Tripoli and the mid-section of the crusaders' lands, he hastened out to the coast toward the city of Tortosa, held by the Templars.

Coming within sight of Tortosa, his men put on their armor before the tents were up. "God willing," the sultan said, "we shall dine in the citadel this evening." They stormed the low ramparts, sweeping over them in the first fierce rush. And the servants who had been putting the camp in order left their work to join in the pillaging. The little cathedral of Our Lady of Tortosa was devastated, and the camp set up anew within the walls.

North of the sands of Tortosa lay the rich hill country of Antioch that had suffered not at all from the disaster in the south. Saladin hastened through it as a reaper strides through a field of ripe wheat. Baha ad Din and the learned men had to keep pace with the horses—for the sultan took all his great family along. They rode with the baggage, in the dust by the endless strings of camels laden with tents and grain and the parts of the siege engines. Before sunset they halted by streams or wells, in the cool breeze from the sea, while the animals were turned out to graze, and cavalry pickets went to the heights around them.

Such marches were an old story to them. Rice or barley

boiled with mutton sufficed them for a cooked meal, with the fruit of the country, and they slept on quilts or robes spread in the sand. After the last prayer, while fires still blazed and torches came and went, they sat together in talk or listened to the wailing song of dervishes, and still they were up and saddling their beasts before the first warmth of sunrise.

It was a fertile country, with figs and grapes to be plucked and sheep to be driven in. They took the citadels almost in their stride—for now they were beyond the nests of the stubborn Templars and Hospitalers, and the men who faced them fought without hope. They carried Jebala in a day, and mocked the garrison that trooped away without its arms. The fair city of Laodicea with its two castles by the sea yielded in seven days, and the army took from it a new stock of grain and animals and gold and silver.

Late in July, Saladin turned inland, climbing to the lofty Sahyoun, and carrying the village in the first rush. His soldiers ate the midday meal the Christians had abandoned in the cooking pots. A few days later the citadel on the precipice yielded to his engines.

Bika followed Sahyoun, and Saladin's advance halted before Borzia, overlooking the great inland river Orontes. Saladin ordered his men to attack without respite, in three reliefs, and the Moslems climbed the almost unclimbable walls, sending the castellan and his kin to tell the news to Antioch.

Down from the hills they swept, across the Iron Bridge, and early in September Turbessel and Bagras fell to them after a sturdy resistance. "I saw," said Baha ad Din, "how when one Christian fell dead in the ranks another took his place. They held together, immovable as a wall."

But they did not attempt to take Antioch, where the remaining Christians had gathered. Saladin looked from a distance at the immense gray ramparts of the northern stronghold, and agreed to withdraw if all Moslem captives were yielded up to him. He had taken possession of the surrounding country, and drawn the teeth of Antioch. His garrisons were posted now from Aleppo to the ranges of the Taurus, and he did not wish to waste men in a long siege. Back to

Damascus he marched, down the broad inland valley, and the lords of Moslem Hamah and Homs vied in entertaining him.

Saladin was urged to disband his army and rest, in the holy month of Ramadan. "Life is short, and fate is uncertain," he said, and took the field again. This time he struck at the obstinate south, at Safed in the hills above Tiberias. Arriving under its walls in the evening, he rode off to inspect it, and ordered siege engines to be set up at one place.

"I shall not sleep until these five mangonels are in place."

Safed fell. And Saladin moved on, to the Star of the Winds, overhanging the dark gorge of the Jordan. Rains made the slippery hill summit a mass of mud, and winds chilled the laboring men. The sultan fasted with them—since this was Ramadan—and moved his tent so close to the wall that arrows and bolts fell into it. He would not withdraw and his mamluks worked in a frenzy to take the castle and so to put an end to the missiles. Covering the ramparts with a steady barrage of arrows and shafts from the steel arbalests, they drove the Christian bowmen back, and mined the wall.

"Rain fell without ceasing," Baha ad Din says with feeling, "and it was as hard to walk in the mud afoot as on a horse. We suffered from the wind."

On the fifth of January, 1189, the Star of the Winds surrendered. And the Moslems rejoiced to a man. Before then they had heard that the great Kerak had fallen to another army—the black banners stood over the stronghold of the old wolf of Kerak, and the caravans could go along the pilgrim road in peace.

Then Saladin consented to allow his men to rest. Except for the Tripoli region, only Tyre and its supporting castle of Belfort remained to menace him. And the task of rebuilding the damaged strongholds and inspecting the garrisons confronted him. After a visit to Jerusalem and a few days prayer in the Al Aksa mosque, he took to the road again with his household troops.

Baha ad Din, now kadi of the army, went with him, but the donkey of other years had been exchanged for a horse. And the worthy counselor labored as he had never done be-

fore. Once he rode out alone with the sultan by the sea, and Saladin, after a silence of meditation, faced the waters.

"*Inshallah*," he said. "If God wills, the infidels shall be driven into the sea. Then I shall follow them, and in other lands carry on the conquest that is ordained."

Baha ad Din, who had in common with men of the hills a dread of setting foot on a ship, began to be afraid.

"That assuredly might be done," he responded. "Let thine amirs lead the army over the sea, to what is ordained. But thou, O my lord, art the staff and the prop of Islam. Do not venture thy life upon the waters."

Saladin reflected. "Tell me this," he responded. "What manner of death is most to be desired?"

"Verily, the death of a martyr in the holy war is beyond all things to be sought."

The sultan nodded assent. "And so do I seek it."

Over the sea, many sails moved toward the east. Gray sails clustered like gulls upon the blue waters. Long oars flashed in the sun, over the sea border into the east.

Upon the highways heavy horses paced. Shield and spear and gray mail carried the riders. For the iron men were riding again—they were marching to the east.

With uplifted crucifix the black priests rode. Through the long valleys tossed the standards of the kings. Between the hills resounded the olifants of the princes and barons. From the snows of the North the weapon men were marching, toward the sun above Jerusalem. The host of Christendom was taking up its arms, to aid the Holy City. "Aid for Jerusalem," the black priests cried. "Strike down the horns of Mahound, and the claws of Dracon! Seek salvation in the city of the Lord."

They were passing down the Danube and through the ports of Sicily; they were thronging toward the border, to set Jerusalem free.

XV

THE GATHERING STORM

Imad ad din and Baha ad Din found interesting letters passing under their hands. Their master Saladin had become the most powerful prince in near-Asia. Of course Kilidj Arslan, off in Asia Minor, still defied him, but after an overthrow in the field could no longer challenge him. And the king of the Armenians, clinging like an eagle to his mountain nests, yielded to Taki ad Din's cavalry. Envoys came frequently from Baghdad, where the kalif had adopted Saladin as his providential protector. And finally the rich and anxious emperor in Constantinople sent ambassadors to the moving court of the sultan, to present a missive of congratulation stamped with an image of pure and heavy gold. And the emperor, Isaac the Angel, asked for an alliance.

To this missive the intelligent Arabs paid little heed, but the emperor Isaac offered to build new mosques for them in Constantinople, requesting them to send up the proper readers and holy men to serve the mosques. It pleased Saladin that his muezzins should call to prayers in the foremost city of Christendom.

A letter came in from a greater man, Friedrich Barbarossa —Frederick the Red Beard—by divine mercy emperor of

the Romans, and Augustus, and lord of all the German states and principalities. The Arab counselors puzzled over the strange names in the letter—Bavaria, Swabia, Saxony, Franconia, Thuringia, Westphalia. And the names of other men who served the emperor—Lorrainers, Burgundians, Swiss, Frisians, Italians, Austrians, and Illyrians.

The emperor threatened that if Jerusalem were not surrendered, he would come against the Moslems with all this host. "Take warning by Pharaoh, and yield Jerusalem."

The Arabs knew very well who Barbarossa was—the chief sultan of the Franks, and the defender of Christendom. They knew it because Isaac the Angel, who feared Barbarossa, sent them these tidings, with appeals for aid. Saladin himself answered Barbarossa.

"All that remains," he said, "for us to do is to take Tyre, Tripoli, and Antioch."

If, however, these cities were evacuated in peace by the Christians, he offered to return the cross, release all captives, and allow one priest to serve the altar of the Sepulcher. He promised as well to permit the monks to return to the monasteries they had held before the first Moslem conquest. Pilgrims to the Sepulcher might come and go in peace. In his letter Saladin signed himself Guardian of the Two Noble Sanctuaries.

The terms, from Saladin's point of view, were fair. Barbarossa would not have them, and the Moslems heard that he had set out upon the crusade in the spring of that year, 1189. More than that, Isaac the Angel wrote that the old emperor led a host of a hundred thousand men-at-arms, and that the duke of Austria was preparing to follow him. The French, also, were mustering for the road, and their young king Philip II, Augustus, had taken the cross with the king of England from the hand of William, archbishop of Tyre.

Meanwhile the Venetian merchants who were trying to preserve their trading posts in the captured areas brought other tidings to the court at Cairo. The fleet of Norman Sicily was anchored off the port of Tripoli, while the ships of Pisa were already under way. And the sails of the northmen had been seen off the coast of Granada.

Saladin listened to the tidings, and sent couriers to Baghdad to relate to the kalif what was preparing. By pigeon post and camel back he sent orders to all his Moslem vassals to join him in the Holy Land. He commanded Karakush to muster the forces of Egypt and hold them in readiness.

Watching the gathering storm, he knew that this would be the real war. The Christian forces he had defeated in the last two years had been no more than a fragment of these new armies. The kings and princes of Frankland would merge their men in a mighty host, greater than his own. Perhaps he might face a quarter million of fresh foemen, under new leaders. And he had never had fifty thousand warriors under his banners at the same time.

On the sea, also, his Egyptian fleet would be confronted by a greater armament, and he must be prepared to see the Christians victorious on the water. They could, accordingly, land at whatever point they wished—while Barbarossa marched down through Asia Minor and the mountain passes.

This would be, he understood, a new kind of war. The armed hosts of Europe would converge on his coasts. It would be a duel between the resources and the weapons of the West, against the horsemen of the East, under his command.

And he had little time to prepare. He could not await the coming of all the Moslem clans, scattered from the upper Nile to the mountains of Persia. Yet, before the Christian armies set foot on the coast, he ought to clear the coast of their last strongholds.

In May he heard that Mont Réal, the sister fortress to Kerak, had fallen, thus giving the Moslems control of all the Dead Sea region. There remained, along the coast, only the mighty Krak des Chevaliers, guarding Tripoli, and Belfort, standing in the hills above Tyre. While the sultan waited for his eastern allies and prepared a joint attack against Antioch and Tripoli, he settled his household troops to besiege Belfort.

This was one of the massive citadels newly built by the crusaders and planned with all the skill of their engineers. It overlooked the summits of the lower Lebanon, and its

garrison could see on one hand the glitter of the sea, and on the other the snow peak of giant Hermon.

The top of the Belfort height formed a long and narrow plateau, with the reservoir at one end, and the castle at the other. On the far sides, the walls of the fortress crowned the very brow of a cliff too steep to assault. On the plateau side it was protected by a gully over which rose a sloping talus, surmounted by a thirty-five-foot wall, the corners strengthened by great towers. The gully, being closed at the ends, was filled with water. So Belfort was like an armored giant, with his feet too firmly planted to be overthrown, his back guarded by the precipice, and his breast shielded by his arms. And the plateau was too cramped for a besieger to place his men there without danger of being driven down the slope by a sally of the garrison. The Moslems had left it unmolested for two years.

When Saladin appeared under Belfort, the lord of the castle went out to him in truce. Reginald of Sidon was scion of an old family of crusaders, and he knew the Moslem mind as well as speech. He lingered in the sultan's tent, discussing the situation, and he agreed to yield Belfort in three months, after he could safeguard his family on the coast. Saladin assented, because an assault upon the castle would be both long and costly, and he had all the captured citadels to repair.

The time expiring, the sultan reappeared, and Reginald went forth again, to ask for a new delay. He even remained as the guest of the Moslems, until their suspicions grew to certainty, and they understood that he was bargaining for time. They seized him then, carried him to the ditch before Belfort's wall, and bound him upon a crucifix. Saladin reproached him with breaking faith, and told him that he would be tortured until he called to his men to yield the castle.

Reginald did call out at once, to the watchers on the wall. He bade them under no condition give up Belfort. When the Moslem soldiers, gathering the meaning of his words, would have set upon him, Saladin restrained them, and ordered the crusader to be taken down from the cross and sent to cap-

tivity in Damascus. So Belfort, deprived of its lord, still held out.

Nor were the cities of Tripoli and Antioch attacked. Instead Saladin was obliged to hasten to a point unheeded until then.

XVI

GUY MARCHES TO ACRE

The man who took the initiative at this critical moment before the forces of the West came into full contact with the Moslems was Guy of Lusignan, who had been king—by virtue of his wife—of Jerusalem for a year. "A simple man," the chroniclers say, "and not wise."

Perhaps Guy did not lack personal courage, but he did lack initiative. Banned from England, he drifted into the service of Jerusalem where his younger and much more able brother Amalric was constable. Chosen by the ambitious Sibyl for her mate, he sat quietly enough on his throne until it was wrenched from under him. When Saladin—keeping to the letter the promise he had made at Ascalon—released Lusignan from captivity, after the surrender of that city, the former king sought out his wife in Tripoli.

With him other lords were freed. Humphrey of Toron was ransomed by the surrender of Kerak. Amalric rode out with his brother, and even De Riddeford was released. At Tripoli they found the débris of the court, and newcomers from the ships—two fleets of crusaders having come in, from Sicily and Pisa—and the throng of them sailed down to

join the other refugees at Tyre. And at Tyre the gates were closed against them.

Conrad, lord of Tyre, ordered it. He was now marquis of Montserrat—his father, a captive of Hattin, having died. Conrad had the quick wit of the Italians, and the easy conscience of an adventurer. Although rumor said that he had a wife at home, he had married a Byzantine princess, sister to Isaac the Angel. He spoke all languages and proved himself equal to most situations.

He had, like the wolf of Kerak, the one virtue of skill in war. His instant action on landing at Tyre had preserved the city from Saladin. Nor had Conrad consented to yield it to save the life of his father when the aged marquis was brought before the walls—he said his father had lived long enough, in any case. Baha ad Din says he was a great personage, wise and energetic, and other Moslems, while admitting his bravery, call him worse than a wolf and meaner than a dog. He had firm friends and bitter enemies. And his character shaped events in the Holy Land for two years.

When the refugees of Tripoli landed on the beach beside Tyre, Conrad barred them out. No doubt his small city was overcrowded, but he had no wish to admit the man who had been overlord of Jerusalem to his walls. The strong adventurer would not yield his place to the weak king. And so Guy, uncertain what to do next, pitched his tents on the shore.

It was a strange situation, and for a time there was hot debate in the city and the camp. Guy was, after all, still king in name and many in Tyre had pledged their faith to him. The best of the surviving lords were with him—the brothers of Tiberias, the knight of Toron, and Amalric. There, too, was the queen, Sibyl, and the stern master of the Temple.

Numbers of Pisans and Germans left Conrad to join Guy, so that by late summer he had four hundred knights and seven thousand others with him. Just what impelled him to act will never be known.

Perhaps Sibyl demanded it, perhaps the Templars and the knights persuaded him to it, or perhaps the hesitant Guy had in this moment a flash of determination that never came to

him thereafter. With the Moslems swarming around him, and the Christian fleets drawing nearer, he set out from his camp and marched on the great city of Acre.

"Never," cries a chronicler, "did another show such audacity, and it is truly wonderful that he had the enterprise to go to fight men who were a hundred to his four."

When released, Lusignan had given his word that he would not bear arms against the Moslems. Now he broke his faith. Of course the patriarch had insisted that he was king, and so must go out again to the war. And the priests declared that it would be a sin to keep a pledge that would harm the Church. Guy appeased his conscience by a petty makeshift. He did not wear his sword now; it was hung upon his saddle peak instead of his girdle, so that he might say that he did not bear arms. But the truth remains, that he broke his faith.

Saladin, when he heard of it later, made no protest. He much preferred to have the harmless Guy in command of the Christians, and he had released the king with that end in view. Meanwhile the Moslem scouts reported to the sultan who was then at Belfort that the king's small army was marching down the coast, leaving Tyre behind it. Saladin wished to march at once, and descend upon it from the hills. But all his amirs advised him to wait, until the presumptuous little army should reach Acre. Then the sultan could cut it off and destroy it between his host and the garrison of Acre. This was sound advice from a military point of view, and Saladin yielded to it. And in yielding he made his greatest mistake.

He was thinking of the north, listening for the approach of Barbarossa and watching for the sails of the crusaders' fleets—the fleets that might land anywhere from Constantinople to Cairo. By all the laws of warfare, Guy's seventy-four hundred were doomed—since Saladin's cavalry could descend from the heights of Lebanon and surround them before they could possibly return to Tyre.

So, for the time being, Guy's army was no more than a pawn, moving out of its own accord to a vacant square without any protection. And it would be poor strategy for the Moslem players to attack this pawn with their stronger

pieces, while the enemy was preparing to attack elsewhere. The game itself was at hazard, because the crowned heads of Christendom were grouped about the chessboard.

The pawn moved. Down past the rocky shoulder of the Ladder of Tyre, where it might easily have been cut off, since here the hills jutted into the sea. And now it is necessary to glance at the square of the chessboard lying before it.

The plain of Acre, they called it. A flat shore, stretching south for twenty-odd miles, from the Ladder of Tyre to the mass of Mount Carmel. A fertile shore, hot and green in this month of August, extending roughly seven miles inland to the foothills. Beyond the foothills in the northern part rose the gray slopes of the higher ranges, with Hermon's bald summit above them.

Midway along the shore a small, low promontory stuck out. All this promontory was surrounded by a wall, and within the wall lay the city of Acre.

South of Acre, a long shallow half-moon bay extended to the point of Carmel. The shore here was sandy. Palm groves clustered above the sedge grass. A small river, laboring across the plain, debouched into a half-dozen streams that ended in the sedge, forming a marsh. Such was the plain of Acre, and upon it waited a destiny more terrible than the fate of Waterloo.

The army of crusaders should never have descended into it from the rocks of the Ladder of Tyre. Having done so, they should have been destroyed by the Moslems. So say the rules of warfare. But the men and women who marched across the plain of Acre were driven by an impulse more potent than all the reasoning of warfare—the perversity of human beings. They were weary of waiting at Tyre; they wanted to open the road to Jerusalem, and Acre was the first city upon their way. In spite of everything, they decided to besiege Acre.

There were, however, wise heads among them, and instead of camping under the walls they marched direct to a mound, or rather a series of mounds above the orchards a half mile from the sea. While the tents were pitched on the high ground, the men-at-arms labored at digging a ditch around the mounds. All through the night they worked, and in the morning they

diverted the water from the nearest stream into the ditch so that they had a fairly good moat around the camp. Then they began to throw up an earth wall behind the ditch.

Naturally the Moslems in Acre took an interest in their visitors, and sallied out to skirmish in the plain. Nothing serious happened for a while because the Moslems were waiting for Saladin to come down from his hills and erase this audacious encampment, while the Christian knights knew better than to venture far from their lines. They raided the plain for supplies, and they did not lack for water.

They christened the new position the Toron, or the Hill. And, realizing that they were cut off here, and would soon be besieged, they began to turn anxious faces toward the hills. Only a day's ride past Saffuriya to the east lay the great plateau of Hattin, where even the ravens had long since forsaken the gaunt bones of the dead.

So they waited on the bare brown knolls, with the banner of the cross planted by the queen's pavilion, and their horses picketed down in the grass by the ditch.

What happened then is related by a minstrel of the court named Ambrose who was there and saw it all.

They dared not linger in the groves below them; they stayed on the heights. It was three days after our men arrived and settled themselves on the Toron, where they kept under arms all night against the attacks of the Saracens, that the troops of Salahadin[1] came—Turks, Persians, and Beduins—and occupied all the country. The third day of the week Salahadin came himself, thinking that he would soon have the heads of the Christians.

Do not be surprised if they, who defended their heads, were uneasy and anxious during the watches and labors on this Toron where they had settled themselves. The Turks assailed them night and day, and wearied them so much they could scarcely eat. There Geoffrey of Lusignan spared himself nothing in defending the host. Long had he been hardy and wise, but now he gained great renown. From Monday to Friday they were all in this peril. But you will see how God defended them.

While the king and all his men were in such fear that they

[1]So Ambrose has written Saladin, correctly. Geoffrey was the third of the Lusignan brothers.

watched the far-off sea and begged God to send them some aid, behold—there arrived a great fleet of barks with people in them. It was James of Avesnes, from Flanders. I do not believe that Alexander or Hector was ever a better knight than he. It was James, who had sold his lands and possessions to put his body in the service of Him who died and arose again. He had with him fourteen thousand renowned men-at-arms. Then it was the fleet of Danemark that came with many fine castellans, who had good brown horses, strong and swift.

What had happened was that the Pisan, the Danish, and Frisian fleets bearing the crusaders to the coast had sailed down from Tripoli to Tyre. There they heard of the king's sally to Acre, and came on to join him. Galleys and ships were run up on the beach near the city, and the newcomers fought their way across the plain to the camp.

Conrad of Montserrat arrived from Tyre in his ships, to join the gathering host. The Christians now numbered more than thirty thousand and their ships blockaded the port of Acre. They dared extend their lines on either hand, so that the Toron camp became a semi-circle, isolating Acre from the hills.

XVII

THE SIEGE BEGINS

SALADIN, seeing that the real force of the crusaders was centering here, called in his divisions from the northern hills, leaving only a few companies to carry on the siege of Belfort. His first effort in that month of September was to provision and strengthen Acre, which had not been prepared for a siege. Without much trouble, Taki ad Din's cavalry broke through the camp of the Pisans which adjoined the sea at the northern end of the semi-circle, and for two days kept open this avenue of approach, while strings of camels laden with grain and supplies were passed in, with a whole corps of the army commanded by Karakush who had been summoned from Cairo. The sultan and Baha ad Din went in and walked along the walls, studying the lines of the crusaders.

With the city thus strengthened, Saladin withdrew from it, and took command of his army which had been increased daily by new contingents. Moving down from the hills into the plain, he surrounded the crusaders in his turn, and struck at them with his horsemen.

Ambrose tells how, in this crisis, new masses of crusaders arrived from the sea.

A fortnight had not gone by, when the count of Brienne arrived to join us, and with him his brother Andrew, son of a good father and a goo dmother. There came also the seneschal of Flanders with more than twenty barons, and a German landgrave bringing with him good Spanish horses. And the bishop of Beauvais who was neither aged nor infirm, with Count Robert his brother, a skillful and nimble knight. And the count of Bar, as courteous a man as you could find. Many others, valiant and wise, joined the host at the same time.

But the more they came, the less the Saracens feared them. Night and day they delivered attacks, and approached even to the tents. Those in the city made sorties. Know well that they had not been taken from plough and cart, those people in Acre. They were the best of the infidels, to guard and defend a city.

The others outside grew in number every day, and filled the whole country so that our people looked upon themselves as prisoners.

At the end of September Saladin made his effort to break the line the Christians were extending around the city. As usual, he chose for the attack a Friday when the Moslems all over the world would be at prayer. He was in the saddle himself before daybreak, and without eating anything. "Like a mother," says Baha ad Din, "who has lost her child."

He launched his cavalry at different points of the line, to break the close ranks of the stolid men-at-arms, and to separate the divisions of the crusaders. But the issue was not decided that day, nor for several days thereafter.

On a Friday of the month of September [Ambrose relates] I remember that a dire and sad misfortune befell our people. The Saracens attacked them without a day's respite. The Christians armed themselves and arranged themselves in good order, in the different commands that had been agreed upon. On one flank the Hospital and the Temple held the river where numerous enemies were—it was they who always began a battle. In the center of the army the count of Brienne and his men, the landgrave and the Germans who formed a great company, remained by a deserted mosque and cemetery. King Guy and the Pisans and other valiant men were on the right, at the Toron, to watch the Turks.

The Saracens came on with spirit. You would have seen fine regiments among them.

The Templars and the Hospitalers charged, assailed the first ranks, pierced them, threw them into disorder, drove them in flight and pursued them. Then the other Christians charged also, and the Saracens gave ground. But there was such a mass of them that the Christians did not know where to turn. The Turks could not rally themselves. They were drawing near the hills, when the Devil mixed himself in it and caused the death of many of our men.

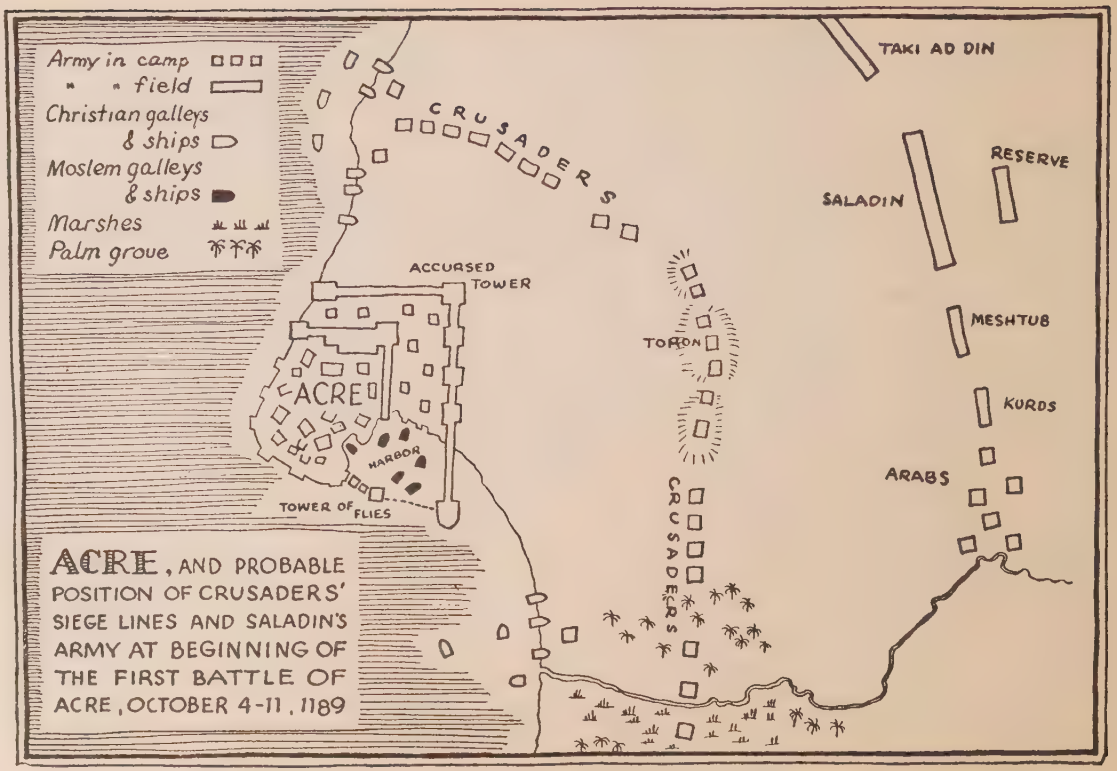
A horse belonging to a German ran away; its owner pursued it, and his companions also ran after the horse without being able to catch it. The horse ran toward the city. The Saracens believed our men were fleeing, so they faced about and charged in their turn. And they carried themselves so well that those who should have directed our army were only able to defend themselves.

While the worthy Ambrose attributed the defeat to Satan's power, the Moslems knew better, and Baha ad Din wrote a clearer account of the battle.

It seems that the best of the Moslem generals, Taki ad Din, commanded the strong right wing of Saladin's army. The sultan himself led the center, which was made up of their household troops. One of the older amirs, Meshtub, had the left wing, with mixed divisions of Kurds, Arabs, and mamluks, near the river.

When the Templars charged, Taki ad Din decided to draw back his line to higher ground, and Saladin mistook this maneuver for flight. The sultan sent his reserve cavalry from the center to the retreating right wing. The commanders of the Christian center noticed this weakening of the Moslem center and charged point-blank at the sultan's standard. Some Moslem regiments were broken and driven back, but Saladin's mamluks retired a little without breaking ranks. So by midday the Moslem right wing was swinging away from the rest of the army, and the center was pivoting back on the unbroken left. It was as if the crusaders had pushed apart double folding doors.

They poured through the gap, pursuing the scattered Moslem regiments—some of which fled headlong until they reached the bridge over the Jordan!—until they sighted Saladin's camp ahead of them. The guards of the camp rode off, and the light-fingered Arab clansmen began to plunder


Army in camp
" " field
Christian galleys & ships
Moslem galleys & ships
Marshes
Palm grove
TAKI AD DIN
CRUSADERS
RESERVE
SALADIN
ACCURSED TOWER
MESHTUB
TORON
KURDS
ACRE
HARBOR
ARABS
TOWER OF FLIES
CRUSADERS
ACRE, AND PROBABLE POSITION OF CRUSADERS' SIEGE LINES AND SALADIN'S ARMY AT BEGINNING OF THE FIRST BATTLE OF ACRE, OCTOBER 4-11, 1189

the tents even when the crusaders were riding in. Some of the knights penetrated as far as Saladin's pavilion before they realized that they had advanced miles beyond their main forces, and that the Moslems on either hand were making ready to resume the battle. Then the too-venturesome crusaders started back on tired horses, only to be struck and badly mauled by Taki ad Din's and Saladin's horsemen on either hand. They were thrown into disorder and lost heavily.

There was killed Andrew of Brienne [Ambrose resumes]—may his soul be saved—and never died a knight so valiant and helpful. The marquis of Montserrat was so hemmed in by his enemies that he would have been left there if the king Guy had not aided him. And here also was slain the master of the Temple—he who spoke that good word, learned in a good school, when all, brave and fearful alike, called to him after the attack, "Come away, sir, come away!"

He could have come, if he had wished it. "Please God," he answered them, "no one will see me again elsewhere, and no one may reproach the Temple because I had been seen flying." And he did not do it; he died there, for too many Turks cast themselves upon him. And of the common men, five thousand died there—stripped and bare their bodies lay on the field.

When those others in the city heard of the defeat of our men, they mounted their Arab horses, went out the gates and attacked our men with such fury that they would have done them great harm if it had not been for their fine defense. But our men faced them. The knights struck good blows; the king Guy did wonders, and Geoffrey of Lusignan, who endured much that day, did likewise, with that valiant James of Avesnes. So the enemy were beaten back and driven within the city again.

So passed this day in which fortune went against us. The Saracens were so encouraged—may God curse them as I curse them—that they began to vex and harass the Christians more than they had done before. When the valiant men and the barons saw this, they said, "Seigneurs, we gain no advantage at all. We must resolve upon something to protect ourselves against these offspring of Satan who torment us every day and steal our horses in the night."

Here is the resolution they made. They dug a ditch, wide and deep, and lined it with shields, mantlets, and beams from the ships. Thus they divided the ground by the ditch. However, the Saracens attacked them without ceasing, and left them no peace.

Listen to a sad thing! At the end of the slaughter of which I have spoken, and which was so grievous for the Franks—the day after the *élite* of the host had been discomforted and so many poor people who had come there for God had found death—Salahadin had all the dead bodies taken up and sent back tous by casting them into the river of Acre. This was an ugly shambles, for the bodies drifted down the current until they arrived in the midst of the army, and as the heaps of the dead grew, such an odor arose that all the army had to go off far enough to be beyond it. And long after they had been buried, we still kept away from the odor.

Meanwhile the Christians worked at the ditch which served them as a rampart. They kept themselves behind it when the Saracens came to attack it, as they did every day, hot or cold. This ditch became the battle field of the people of God, and of these dogs. Our men wished to dig it deeper and the others wished to destroy it. You would have seen then . . . arrows.[1] They who dug the ditch passed them up to those who defended it. You would have seen, on both sides, men hardy and courageous. You would have seen the fighters fall, rolling over, and cutting open bellies, and giving heavy blows. Only the night separated them.

Even those of us who were most at ease endured fears and watches and fatigues; they dared not take rest before finishing the ditch.

On the eve of All Saints' Day happened a great misadventure. Those who were on the Toron watched the side toward Haifa, and they saw a great fleet of galleys approach from Egypt. The fleet drew near in good array, and the news spread swiftly throughout the host. Some believed, although no one knew it for certain, that these were vessels of Genoa, of Venice, of Marseille or of Sicily that came to aid in the siege. While they gave themselves up to wondering, the galleys came in, and they came in so well that they entered the port of Acre and in doing so they carried off one of our ships which had men and provisions on it. This ship was towed into the city, the men were killed and the provisions taken.

Listen to what the Turks did. On All Saints' Day, they hung on the walls of Acre in defiance the bodies of the Christians they had killed in the ship. So the souls of these dead shared, our preachers said, in the great joy of the heavens that day.

This fleet of which I have told you guarded so well the port and the coast that aid no longer arrived for the defenders of God. The

[1]A line of Ambrose's manuscript here is obscure. His narrative is in short, crudely rhymed verses.

winter came on, without bringing fresh provisions to them. They had finished the ditch, but later on it was ruined in spite of them.

So Ambrose wrote, in blunt, awkward words. It is clear that Saladin made every effort to break the line of the Christian camp, and failed. While the crusaders had been worsted and cut to pieces on the first day of the battle, they held their ground thereafter. Saladin felt that the issue must be decided now, and the attacks pushed home. Ill as he was with malaria, he summoned his amirs to his tent, saying, "Now we have before us the chance of victory. Our enemies are few, but they will remain and more will come over the sea. And the only aid we can look for is from Al Adil, in Egypt. It seems best to me to attack."

But for the second time the amirs persuaded him to change his mind. The autumn rains were beginning, with the holy month of Ramadan, and they were eager to return to their homes for the winter's planting. The sultan himself was ill, and later, in the spring, Malik Adil would join them. So they argued and Saladin, as at Tyre, consented to send the volunteer levies home and to cease the battle, withdrawing himself to his main camp in the hills. Arabs and detachments of regulars were left in the foothills to watch the crusaders.

During the stormy season no new fleets could approach the coast of the Holy Land, nor were the ships of the crusaders—long, unseaworthy galleys, or round tubs of cargo vessels or open barks—able to blockade the port of Acre. Winds from the west drove a heavy, ceaseless swell upon the shelterless shore, and the larger boats that could not be drawn up on the beaches had to return to the northern harbors or to Cyprus.

In mist and wind and beating rain the year 1189 ended. The siege of Acre had begun. But the crusaders outside the walls were hemmed in and besieged in their turn. Open warfare in the outer country ceased for the time being, and in the Acre plain a new kind of strife was born—trench warfare.

XVIII

KARAKUSH BURNS THE TOWERS

Seen from a distance, Acre looked very much like a clenched fist projecting out from the shore. A gray and motionless fist that never changed. Its outer wall made a right angle, stretching from the joint of the little finger inland to the wrist bone. At this angle rose a square bastion and a mighty tower that the crusaders christened the Accursed Tower.

South from the Accursed Tower, along the other side of the angle, the wall extended as far as the joint of the thumb, where it reached the water. Then, like a massive thumb crooked away from the clenched fist, the wall went out some two hundred yards into the water, forming a harbor between it and the city proper. It ended in a tower. Between this tower and the city—between the curved thumb and the first finger of the fist—an isolated tower rose from the water. This, for good reason, was known as the Tower of Flies. From it, a great chain ran to the end of the wall, just under the surface of the water. The chain prevented enemy ships from coming into the small harbor, and it could be lowered to let a Moslem vessel pass.

Within the large right angle of the outer wall stood a smaller angle, the inner wall—on higher ground. The broad space between the two was occupied by the troops, the horse lines, and markets. Rising over the inner wall could be seen the watch towers of the Templars' house, and the terraces of the Hospital, and the poplars around the little cathedral. (For Acre had been built almost entirely by the crusaders, and the Moslems had only held it for two years.) The bell tower of the cathedral was now surmounted by a muezzin's balcony, and the call to prayer echoed among the kneeling throngs in the courtyard below.

Many of the crusaders knew every stone of the great city wall—upon the summit of which four horsemen could pass, riding in different directions—with its square towers and fortified gates. They knew that no scaling ladders planted in the wide ditch would prevail against that wall. Nor would the Moslems allow a convenient wooden horse to be trundled through the gate.

To enter Acre the crusaders must build engines powerful enough to open a breach in the wall. And nothing could be done during the deluge of rains.

In the mud of the plain a strange city was growing up within the camp of the besiegers. A city of tents and clay walls, lying in a half circle beyond arrow shot of the battlements of Acre. Its walls were yellow clay and sand, its streets were mud, and its gutters canals.

Under bending date palms clustered the drenched pavilions of noblewomen, ladies of Beyond the Sea and the courts of the West. When the sun struck through the clouds, they rode out on their palfreys, long skirts hiding their feet, and samite and velvet sleeves hanging from their shoulders. The newest arrivals wore brave, embroidered crosses upon their breasts. Around them thronged youthful esquires in heavy mantles, and proud knights in girdled chapes and surcoats lined with ermine or sable. Hunting dogs trotted after them.

They might ride along the white sand of the beach, at either end of the intrenched city—where naked fishermen swam out against the surf, towing nets behind them. Or they

might venture into the perilous plain, where Arab horsemen watched for a chance to snatch loot or slay a Christian and carry off his head. Mounted bowmen went out to hunt the Arabs, and knights relieved the dull hours by coursing hares and riding after gazelles toward the foothills.

Through the streets of the tent city surged a motley throng—burghers debating the price of corn and barley stored in warehouses, valerets and masterless men seeking the sheds where sheep were slaughtered and broiled over glowing charcoal, gaunt men-at-arms in leather jackets. Soft Provençal voices mingled with harsh German tongues; blacksmiths' hammers clattered with the swordsmiths' forges; carpenters' axes tapped at the great ships' timbers that were being shaped into arms for the mangonels and sheds for the rams.

Even the rain could not wash away their good humor. Soon these mangonels would be casting darts at the infidels of Acre, and the heads of the iron sows would be butting the great wall yonder. Pilgrims labored to aid the carpenters in the good work, and they sang together:

"Hear us, O Christ our King,
Hear us, O Thou Who art Lord of Kings,
And show us the way."

And the voices of barefoot monks made answer:

"Have pity upon us,
And show us the way."

At nightfall processions wound through the streets, carrying tapers, and throngs gathered in the chapels, between walls of damp clay bricks, where the good bishops with their golden crooks sat in their robes by the new altars, and the swinging censers sweetened the stench of the mud underfoot. At all hours men came to the churches for their needs—the sick to be sprinkled with holy water, babies to be christened, troubled spirits to be confessed and relieved.

For the church was the life center of this multitude—

council chamber, and dispensary, and hospital. It was pleasant for tired eyes to watch the soft lights moving over the altar and the gleaming vestments of the servants of God—it was good to hear the rise and fall of the old chants that even the fishermen knew, the *Ave Maria*, and the *Te Deum*.

Here the shaggy jackmen were as much at home as the valiant father bishop of Beauvais, who liked nothing better than to don armor, and who dreamed of becoming a second Turpin—"If," as one man put it, "he could find a Charlemagne."

"Verily," said another, "here is the Frisian who hath left his fish scales, and the Scotsman who hath left his fellowship with lice."

True, they had no acknowledged leader, but they managed well enough. And by early summer the valiant old emperor, Red Beard himself, would come down out of the north with the German host. While, men said, at home the young king, Richard of England, had made up his long quarrel with Philip king of the French, and the twain had taken the cross from the hand of William, archbishop of Tyre. Soon they would be upon the sea, with their armies.

Meanwhile the artisans of the tent city were finishing three mighty towers built upon rollers and strengthened by heavy timbers and covered with fresh hides nailed to the wood—to protect them against fire. These three towers tapered to summits higher than the wall of Acre, and when they could be rolled against the wall—then the good work would begin.

The rains diminished, the muddy water dried in the ditches, and fresh winds cleared the sky, so that the sun beat down again on the damp walls of Acre and on the dark tent city of the plain. Soft green covered the sand and clay, and spread to the distant summits of the hills. The sound of running water ceased, and the ground all at once became hard underfoot. Along the beaches, the heavy pulse of the swell dwindled. Sails moved over the motionless sea.

Horses and sheep were taken out to the plain to graze, under guard, and men wandered about restlessly. Spring had come to the shore of the Holy Land, and the war began again. Rusted mail was washed and cleaned with oil—bows

spliced anew, and arrows sorted over. Men swarmed like flies around the clumsy wooden engines, twisting ropes into place—drawing the engines out over bridges across the ditch, into the no-man's land between the camp and the walls. Sturdy arms carried mantlets—giant wicker shields covered with leather—and set them up in a line within arrow shot of the walls. Knights in armor led out their chargers and stood by, to guard the new line of assault.

Meanwhile the galleys from Tyre came down, with the Genoese fleet, and the crusaders thronged to the shore to watch the daily skirmishing between their ships and the Moslem galleys from the port. Men waited eagerly for their turn to go out on the ships. The daring seamen even forced their way into the harbor past the Tower of Flies and towed out a Moslem vessel, landing their prisoners on the shore.

The joy was great [Ambrose explains] and you would have seen our women approach, with knives in their hands, to seize the Turks by the hair and tug at them with all their strength. Then they cut off their heads and carried them away. At sea, by God's grace, we had the victory—for detachments of knights from the host, valiant men and well armed who fought hardily, took turns upon the boats. Our fleet drove the enemy galleys within the chain. From that day the Turks shut up within the city could not receive any aid by sea or land.

Slowly the three great towers creaked and swayed, drawing nearer to the outer wall, while mangonels upon their summits spewed iron darts upon the battlements. Large as mountains were the three towers, each with half a thousand men within it. On one the banner of the landgrave stood, on another that of the king Guy, and on the third that of the marquis Conrad—who had come back from Tyre for the assault.

From the embrasures of these moving pyramids crossbrows snapped and their iron quarrels whirred over the parapet of the wall. When the quarrels struck a man they tore through shield and mail and flesh and bone. From the barricade on the tops of the towers skilled archers plied their shafts. Sliding over stone rollers, the towers drew nearer the moat of Acre.

Already columns of men waited, behind the shelter of the mantlets, to run forward into the towers, when the drawbridges should be lowered upon the wall and swordsmen would rush forward.

Swiftly the Moslems labored, to destroy the towers before they could approach too near. Engines on the walls, working under the direction of Karakush, the mamluk who knew all the arts of siege and defense, cast stones against them. But they were built of solid beams joined together. The beams cracked and yielded, without breaking. Other engines shot out flaming timbers that struck down the crusaders on the tops. But hides soaked in vinegar covered the wood, and prevented the fire from catching.

While the throngs of men labored, a youth of Baghdad, Ibn an-Nadjar by name, sought out Karakush, standing among his amirs on the wall.

"I wish," said an-Nadjar, "to aid my master Saladin, and burn these towers."

The veteran mamluk listened with half an ear. "And how wilt thou do that?"

"I will prepare naphtha by a formula I know, and I will cast it upon the towers. If they were steel, they would burn."

"Ah, well," Karakush looked at him. "Do the best thou canst."

And he gave the young copper worker two hundred dinars to prepare his materials.

Later in the day, an-Nadjar was ready. He returned to the wall with soldiers who lugged three large copper cylinders from which short tubes projected. These pots, as the Moslems called them, were placed opposite the wooden pyramids, and one of them was lifted into the arm of a stone caster. The arm was drawn back, and released—whirling the copper bomb against the broken face of the tower opposite.

Flames roared from the bomb—streams of fire shot into the framework of beams. Within the tower the crusaders could not go near the copper bomb, and the fire caught, soaring up when the wind sucked at it. By sunset on that day the three mighty towers lay in smoking embers.

The loss of the towers put an end to the attack, and the

crusaders withdrew into their camp to plan new engines. They had known of the terrible weapon of the Arabs that they called Greek and wild fire, and they had heard that it was compounded of sulphur or naphtha, but this was the first time they had felt the effects of it.

They were too full of hope to be discouraged. Did not the men from the ships say that the great kings of England and France had put to sea with new hosts? And rumors trickled down through the mountains of the Armenians—strange stories of Barbarossa at odds with the treacherous Byzantines—prevailing over the Byzantines, and marching on and on, over the barren lands, drawing nearer every day.

Spring was in the air, and they had food and plenty of ships. Soon they would be ready again to face the minions of Mahound, the very legions of Anti-Christ who had mocked them from the wall.

Jackmen and axmen, valerets and peasants, seafarers and bowmen—they put their heads together, and decided to do something on their own account. While the great lords lingered, they chafed at the waiting. They could not climb the wall of Acre, that was certain. But off yonder they could see the tents of the infidels, in the foothills, and they wanted to strike a blow or two. Besides, there would be plunder in the tents.

So they banded together, burly Flemings and shaggy Danes, eager Provençals, and Pisans. Sergeants, ribalds, and men-at-arms—ten thousand of them marched off toward the foothills without leaders, on the fête of St. James. "They were," Ambrose says, "poor fellows, having great need and driven by their suffering, for we were not at ease in the host."

In orderly ranks they marched off, and later in the day word came back that they had entered the tents. But they did not appear with their spoil and presently some knights went to look for them. That evening a few of the infantry did come back, escorted by the horsemen, and without plunder of any kind. The rest of them, seven thousand, lay dead within the Moslem lines.

But the daily conflicts in no-man's land, around the engines, went on without ceasing. Ambrose made note of them.

As the days passed, many things happened. Before and behind the stone casters, which were numerous in the host, many men came and went. I can not remember or relate all the adventures, but here is one.

A Turk came out with his bow for a shot at our men, and would not go away. A Frenchman, aroused by this obstinacy, went out on his side. The Frenchman called himself Marcaduc—he was no son of a duke or a king—and the Turk, hardy and powerful, called himself Grayir. The one made ready to aim on the other—the Frenchman on the Turk, the Turk on the Frenchman.

Grayir demanded what country Marcaduc was from. "I am of France," he replied, "and thou art mad to come down here."

"Thou art no bad shot," the Turk said to him. "Wilt thou make an agreement? I will shoot, and thou wilt stand the blow without flinching, and if I miss, I will await thy shaft in the same way."

He talked so much, and begged so that the Frenchman agreed. Then he shot, but his hand slipped and the arrow did not fly.

Marcaduc said to him, "My turn to shoot—wait for me!"

"No," he said, "let me shoot again, and thou canst then try twice at me."

"Willingly," said the Frenchman. But while the Turk was feeling in his quiver for a good shaft, Marcaduc, who was all ready and who did not relish the new arrangement, let go his own arrow and shot him in the heart. "By Saint Denis, I will wait no more for thee."

Another time, it happened that a knight was down in the fosse, outside, on an affair of his own that no one can do without. As he placed himself so, a Turk in one of the outposts—to which he was paying no attention—separated from his companions and raced his horse forward. It was villainous and discourteous to seek to surprise the knight while he was so occupied.

The Turk was already far from his own people, and was approaching the knight with lance in rest to slay him, when our men shouted,

"Run, sir—run, run!"

He had barely time to get up. The Turk came up at a full gallop, believing that he would be able to turn his horse and wheel back, if he needed to do so, but by God's grace, he did not succeed. The knight cast himself to one side, and took up two stones in his hands

—listen to how God takes vengeance! As the Turk checked his horse to turn back upon him, the knight saw him clearly, and as he drew near, struck him with one of the stones upon the temple. The Turk fell dead, and the knight took his horse and led it off by the rein.

He who told me this saw the knight mount the horse and ride him off to his tent, where he kept him with much joy. . . .

Many of our people who were attacking the walls of Acre tried to fill up the ditches.[1] Some gave it up, but others went on piling in the stones they carried there. Barons brought them as well, on their chargers or pack horses, and many women also found satisfaction in carrying them. Among the others, there was one woman who took great pleasure in it.

A Saracen archer, on guard upon the wall, saw this woman about to cast down her burden from her neck. As she came forward, he aimed at her, and struck her. The woman fell to earth mortally wounded, and every one gathered round her. She was twisting her limbs in agony, when her husband came to seek her. But she demanded of all who were there—valiant men and ladies—that, on behalf of God and their own souls, they should make use of her body to fill in the ditch whither she had carried so many stones.

This was done, when God had taken her soul. Now there is a woman who should be remembered!

Days went by, and the grass turned brown under the scorching of the sun. The axes of the carpenters tap-tapped along the beams; the forges of the smithies muttered and purred. Riderless horses were seen galloping over the plain. A dry wind stirred the brittle palms, and brought to the camp the distant sound of weapons clashing and the hoarse voices of laboring men.

Dust swirled around the tents, where women lay, waiting or nursing the sick. By candlelight the barons of the host sat in talk, anxious for news—uncertain what to do next. The water was growing bad, and they had seen the banners of Saladin again on the hills.

One day there was a new sound. Drums thrumming in the foothills and cymbals clashing. Horsemen in mail rode

[1]Outside the wall of the city. The great moat, or fosse, had to be filled in before an attack could be made, and the common people of the crusaders' camp risked their lives by carrying stones or dirt to the ditch, and dumping in their loads.

down, to wheel before the watching crusaders, and swing their long sleeves over their heads. A few hours later—the city always seemed to know the tidings from the hills, although no man could pass through the crusaders' lines, or any ship through the blockade—the excitement spread to the wall. Turbaned heads appeared between the crenels, and voices mocked the besiegers.

"Slain is your emperor! He hath come to his end and now . . . it is as if he had never been."

Troubled were the barons of the host. The good Barbarossa dead! But what of his army, and the German princes?

Other crusaders came in ships to the shore—Henry, count of Champagne, a quiet man, kin to all the kings. And Thibault of Blois, with the proud count of Clermont, and the tall count of Chalons. The chivalry of France was assembling anew in the camp, but they brought evil tidings.

Barbarossa was indeed dead. The old emperor had been at the head of his army, within sight of the Armenian mountains, after many a desert march and struggle. At a ford, where the freshet ran deep, his horse had stumbled, throwing him, clad in his mail, into the water. He had been lifted out, but the shock had weakened the old man and within a few days he ceased to live. His son Frederick had taken command, but many of his nobles had turned back. Others were at Antioch.

The crusaders listened grimly, and after a council chose Henry of Champagne to command them, and to assault Acre without delay.

XIX

THE FULL TIDE

From his base in the foothills, seven miles away, Saladin watched and weighed events. He saw the steady increase of the crusaders' host, and unseen messages reached him hourly from Acre.

In the north the little garrison of Belfort had yielded at last, and the mountain strongholds were all in his hands. But the new leader of the crusaders, Count Henry, sallied out to attack the camp of the Moslems, and Saladin was the first in the saddle. He had with him then the armies of Damascus, of Egypt and Mosul, and his veteran horsemen beat back the Christian onset, taking a heavy toll with their swords.

It was like thrusting back the incoming tide. The water could be dammed or turned aside, but the pressure of the water never ceased—more and more of it came in from the sea. And the Moslems waited anxiously for word from the far North, whither Taki ad Din had gone with the army of Aleppo to check the advance of Barbarossa.

Saladin knew now that the great emperor was dead. A letter came in from the Catholicos, the Christian bishop of Ani—who sent information to Saladin. The Catholicos said

that the son of the emperor still had forty-two thousand men, somber and weary men wearing nothing but armor, marching with rigid discipline and intent only on reaching the Sepulcher. The Armenians had withdrawn from them, and Kilidj Arslan's Seljuks were attacking them.

Then the Catholicos sent down a spy, who told this story:

I took my stand on a bridge that they had to pass, to watch them, and I saw many men pass by, almost all without mail shirts and without lances. When I asked them the cause of this, they replied, "Our provisions were gone and all our firewood, so we were forced to burn a great part of our gear and furniture. We had many dead. We were obliged to kill our horses and eat their meat, and to feed the fire with our lances."

They were still very numerous, but growing more feeble, having almost no horses or supplies. The greater part of their baggage they carried on donkey back.

The third message came in from Taki ad Din. His cavalry had met the marching columns of the Germans, and scattered them along the plain of Antioch. Only five thousand survivors escorting their sick prince reached the shelter of the city—where the Armenians and the lord of Antioch were scheming to seize their treasure chests.

Saladin no longer needed to guard against the German crusaders. He ordered the northern armies back to Acre and the victorious Taki ad Din rode in with his son and the lords of Baalbek and Shaizar, while his wild Kurds sang of their deeds, and the drums of the Moslem camp thundered a greeting to them. The sultan received his nephew in his own tent, and feasted him with a full heart.

In these months Saladin had to force his fever-racked body to keep to the saddle, and he leaned more and more upon the strength of Taki ad Din who had once been a hare-brained raider but who was now the most able general on either side.

Before long the Germans also reached Acre. But they drifted down in ships, some two thousand of them with sixty horses worn to skin and bones. Frederick of Swabia commanded this remnant of the great host that had set out with Barbarossa.

Saladin heard of them, and their condition, almost as quickly as the crusaders who welcomed them. Twice a day, the mamluks in Acre reported to their master in the hills, by pigeon post. Messenger pigeons, released from the roofs of the city, flew over the crusaders' lines to the pavilions of the sultan. On the minute scrolls of paper within the silver cylinders attached to their claws were written the details of the siege—the losses in fighting, the progress of the enemy's engines, and the amount of provisions on hand.

Just now—at the end of the summer—the crusaders were closing in on the wall with grim determination. The battle of the engines began again. The mightiest of the *perriers* on either side were matched against each other, fighting gigantic duels with boulders and tree trunks as missiles, until one or the other was broken down. The pigeon reports told of a Christian mangonel destroyed by a great iron arrow, its tip heated red hot, shot from the wall.

The struggle went on at sea as well. The Pisans built a roof over one of the galleys, and constructed platforms upon the masts, with flying bridges that could be lowered from these fighting tops. While other galleys bombarded the Tower of Flies with missiles, this strange craft was laid alongside the tower, and the seamen attempted to board the tower from the bridges. The attack was beaten off, and the galley burned by Greek fire.

What bothered the defenders most were two *béliers*—the Moslems knew what the Christians called them—built by the bishop of Besançon and the duke of Swabia: two moving castles with framework of iron, and a kind of protective mat of plaited ropes on the side facing the wall. Their tops were fortified, and in the opening beneath one of them an iron beast's head hung—waiting to be swung against the lower stones of the wall.

The *béliers* went forward on wheels, while attacks were made simultaneously at other points where the moat had been filled in. Karakush and his men tried everything, to find a vulnerable spot in the moving castles. When whole marble columns shot from the largest stone casters failed to break the iron framework, the Moslems cast out dry wood

in front of the *béliers*—setting fire to the heaped-up wood. But the castles did not burn.

The Moslem engineers tried all their stock of flame weapons—glass bombs filled with naphtha, and pots of burning tar and sulphur, and cylinders of Greek fire. Still the strange castles did not burn, and the iron beast came nearer.

But the constant pounding broke in the top of one of the *béliers* and the engineers on the wall hastened to drop their bombs of Greek fire into the shattered part. This castle went up in flames.

The other succumbed to different measures. It stood opposite a gate, and the Moslems sallied out unexpectedly, drove off the crusaders, and held their ground long enough to set fire to the interior of the giant machine. Curiosity impelled them to attach chains and iron hooks to the *bélier*, and when they retreated, they drew it after them through the gate, to inspect it at leisure. It took days to cool off, and they estimated that the iron plates and frame weighed 10,000 pounds. Later, they managed to send the beast's head on the ram around to Saladin.

This success encouraged them to try another sally. They armed themselves with some kind of flame projectors, and when the crusaders rushed at them, streams of fire were turned on the armored knights—burning through cloth and skin, and shriveling the flesh beneath. While the Christians rolled and twisted on the ground in agony, the Moslems turned the flames against the line of mangonels, and burned up many of the engines.

All this was reported to Saladin by the pigeon post.

For some reason no pigeons were available to send messages into Acre, but the resourceful Arabs found another way. Volunteer swimmers went down to the shore at night, stealing as near as possible to the crusaders' lines. Stripping off their mantles, they slipped into the water; floating past the anchored boats of the blockade, they made their way into the harbor with gold coins and letters sealed within their belts.

Some of them were killed, and others dropped out of the perilous service, but one man survived and made the trip

every other night—swimming back in the alternate nights. Always his safe arrival was announced by the first pigeon of the morning. Until the day when the pigeon brought no word of the swimmer. Several days later his body was washed up on the beach within the harbor. He had been drowned, but the belt and the sealed packages within it were intact.

"Never before," says Baha ad Din, "did a man deliver after his death a charge entrusted to him."

No longer did Saladin's armies range the countryside. Instead, they settled down in the base camp up the river, building themselves barracks and shops. A steady stream of camel strings moved into the camp with grain sacks and oil jars, cloth and weapons. Beside the caravans walked laborers, slaves, kadis, and vagrant nomad clans.

Around the pavilions of the sultan grew up a third city, with makeshift mosques and covered markets. Saddle workers sat in their booths beside coppersmiths and barber-surgeons who proudly displayed the teeth they had pulled out and the corns they had cut off. Barefoot cobblers squatted in the shade of woven mats, stitching riding boots and slippers, while their urchins fought in the street in front of them.

The market was enormous [a visitor from Baghdad relates]. It had 400 shops of farriers and veterinaries. I counted 28 kettles in a single kitchen, large enough, each one, to hold an entire sheep. There were 7,000 booths—so long had the army remained in the same place.

The Africans had charge of the baths. They dug down an arm's length in the ground and found water; they made a tank and a wall to enclose it out of clay; and they covered it all with a roof of wood and matting. In the thickets around them they cut firewood, with which they heated the water in kettles. It cost a silver coin, or a little more, to bathe oneself.

This was a new kind of war for the Moslem troopers—a test of endurance. Spies were sent into the Christian camp, unarmed peasants carrying fruit or meat to sell, and they brought back surprisingly accurate information. Baha ad

Din, writing his journal in the sultan's tents, knew as well as Ambrose in the crusaders' huts what happened each day—knew how food was failing and how the last ships of the autumn brought in the first English contingents led by a certain archbishop of Canterbury, a warlike prelate.

Gangs of Arabs made nightly raids upon the crusaders' horse lines and seldom returned without trophies of some kind. They even crept through the guards. Clad in black, and moving as silently as animals, they stole into the huts where men lay sleeping—and awakened the sleepers with knives at their throats. Holding fast their prisoners, they explained by signs that an outcry would result in a slit throat. Then they stole back with their captives through the lines.

As the autumn passed, the Christian leaders—the archbishop and Count Henry and Conrad the marquis—made a sortie in force to get possession of a supply of provisions the Moslems had left by the palm grove of Haifa, in the shadow of Carmel. They crossed the river and marched in a compact column between the swarms of Moslem horsemen, the Templars and the English keeping the rear.

They were out in the open country for three days, and Saladin, lying helpless in the grip of fever, fretted himself with worrying because he could not take the saddle against them. And after three days of fighting they cut their way back again to the Christian camp without the provisions, that the Moslems had had time to remove.

So the balance held even between the two hosts. If food was scanty in the crusaders' camp, it was still more so in the city of Acre; if an epidemic swept through Saladin's open camp, it raged more disastrously among the Christians.

The two sides were so accustomed to the sight of each other [Baha ad Din relates] that the Moslem soldiers and the Frankish soldiers sometimes ceased fighting to talk. The two throngs mingled, singing and dancing together, after which they returned to fighting.

Once they said, "We have been fighting for a long time—let us stop a while and allow the boys of the camps to show what they can do." So they matched two parties of boys, who struggled together with great eagerness. One of the young Moslems, seizing a

young infidel, lifted him off the ground and threw him down, making him a prisoner.

A Frank who was watching came forward and redeemed the captive for two gold pieces. "He was your prisoner," the Frank said, to the victorious youth.

The rains began again, but brought no respite this time. The chronicles yield glimpses of the good and ill fortune of both sides—the death of the duke of Swabia—grain ships coming from Egypt at sunset in a rising storm—the ships driven upon the shore by Acre, while Moslems and Christians fought to carry off the precious cargoes. . . . Part of the weakened city wall falling, and the garrison building it up anew under the swords of the advancing knights . . . a surprise attack upon the wall by a single ladder, that almost prevailed . . . Saladin, debating for long hours with his amirs, and in the end deciding to relieve the garrison . . . The war-worn garrison taken off by the ships that brought fresh men in under command of Meshtub, the Kurd, during the storms . . . Karakush still in command. . . .

Even Ambrose, watching this struggle of unyielding multitudes, felt that something rather epic was taking place before his eyes. He knew, it seems, the legends of antiquity and the songs of the elder minstrels. He tried in his own crude verses to make clear what he felt:

Seigneurs! Not of the death of Alexander
Whose passing made such direful clamor,
Not of Paris, nor of Helen,
Who had from their amour such pain,
Nor of Arthur's deeds, of Brittany,
Nor of his hardy company,
Nor of the stalwart Charlemagne
Whom jongleurs sing so merrily—
Do I know the verity.
I can not say, 'tis truth or lie.
But of what befell this host of Acre—
The cold, the ills, the pain they suffer—
All that I can relate indeed,
And good it is for you to heed.

In winter that brings the wind and the rain, it is then that the little folk of the host of Acre had so much misery. Famine had come, and day by day it grew greater. All went well enough, it is true, until Christmas, but when the time of Christmas passed, the lack of things was felt. A man could carry a cask of grain easily enough within his elbow yet it weighed upon him greatly because it cost a hundred besants. A single egg sold for six deniers.

Seigneurs, I say in all truth that they skinned good war horses, and ate their meat voraciously. A crowd gathered around whenever a horse was killed, and a dead horse sold for more than it had ever been worth alive. Even the entrails were eaten. When the men who had money wished to share provisions with others they could not, because so many people came to demand food. Without the herbs they had planted from seed and out of which they now made soup, they could not have held out. You would have seen good sergeants, and even nobles accustomed to wealth, watching the herbage growing, and going out to crop it and eat it.

A sickness followed, and I will tell you about that. It was caused by the rains that fell without ceasing, until all the host was drenched with water. Every one began to cough, and their voices became hoarse, while their heads and limbs swelled.[1] A thousand died in a single day in the army. Because of the swelling, their teeth fell out of their mouths. Many could not cure themselves because they had no food.

Listen to a great evil and a pity! Some men, made by God in His image, were forced by suffering to deny Him. The lack of food was so great in the host that many of our people went over to the Turks. They renounced their faith, saying that God could never have been born of a woman—the cross, and baptism, they renounced all that.

There were in the host two comrades, poor sergeants, who had between them no more than one denier of Anjou, and nothing else unless it was their armor and clothing. They debated how they would use the denier—what food they would buy with it, to suffice for a day. They cast lots, by counting the hairs on bits of fur, and finally they decided that they would buy beans. They got thirteen, and in this number they found one that was hollow. To change it, one of them had to go back more than seven acres, and then the merchant would only change it after much discussion. The sergeant

[1]Baha ad Din says the epidemic came from intestinal fever. When Ambrose speaks of sergeants he means the men-at-arms on foot.

returned, and they ate the beans, nearly mad with hunger. When the beans were gone, their distress was twice as great.

Many men got along with a kind of locust bean and little nuts. Those who were sick drank heavily of strong wine—of which they had a good supply—but not having food to go with the wine, they died by threes and fours at a time.

All the winter the famine lasted, and the men suffered, who had come to aid God—from Christmas to mid-Lent. I know this for certain, and not by hearsay. There were provisions enough in the host, but the merchants sold them dear.

Some men made a search for those who were most miserable—the count Henry did much good, and Sir Josselin of Montoire, who ought not to be forgotten, the bishop of Salisbury, who did not keep his hands closed, and likewise many others who feared God. Supplies arrived at Tyre, but the marquis of Montserrat kept them there and did not let them come to the host. Then they cursed the marquis. No one knew what would happen, and people went about without wishing to look at each other.

In spite of the famine and the general discouragement, the siege was pressed. Before the end of Lent the first grain ships appeared off the coast, to the delight of the common folk who rejoiced in the fate of the Italian merchants who had hoarded grain in the camp for still higher prices. Between Saturday noon, when the ships arrived, and Monday, the price of grain fell from a hundred besants to four.

In April of this year 1191—the second year of the siege—the army had new cause to rejoice. Six great ships came in, one of them bearing the standard of France and the king, Philip II, Augustus. With him landed a splendid group of nobles—the count of Flanders among them. The young king had been long on the way, but he was here, and the whole chivalry of western Europe gathered at last on the sands of Acre.

Some of them saw a bad omen in the landing. A large white falcon, a favorite of the king, escaped from its keeper and soared up over the camp. The falcon came down on the wall of Acre, to the satisfaction of the watching Moslems who caught it at once. Later, Philip sent an envoy to Saladin to

buy back the bird, but the sultan answered that it could not be bought.

After this the French pushed the attack with new spirit, pounding the crumbling wall with their engines. And at each attempt, Saladin's horsemen, warned by the beating of drums in Acre, swarmed to attack the outer line of the crusaders' camp.

Then early in June twenty-five galleys and ships sailed in to the shore. At sight of them all work in the camp ceased, and barons and men-at-arms thronged down to the sea. The clamor of horns and uproar of voices greeted the leading galley—a red vessel bearing the banner of England.

That evening the tapers in the churches were lighted, and bonfires blazed on the shore, while the crusaders sat over their cups, or danced in the streets. And the Moslem spies hastened to Saladin with word that Richard, king of England, had landed.

A man [Baha ad Din explains] mighty in strength, vast in courage, and firm in will. Great battles had he fought, and daring was he in war.

XX

RICHARD AT THE WALL

THE Lion Heart had reached the camp, but not the battle line. On a pallet covered with leopard skins, under the sun-scorched linen pavilion, he tossed and twisted in the grip of fever, his lips and throat covered with sores. His long, powerful arms quivered with weakness.

Yet Richard of England was in the prime of life, being thirty-four years of age and the very figure of a king. Red hair, with a tinge of gold, fell to his massive shoulders. His forehead was smooth and broad, the dark eyes beneath set wide apart. A short beard, close trimmed in the French fashion, covered his chin.

A man he was, confident in his own strength, and intolerant of weakness. He had a boy's generosity and love of display—a restless humor that found satisfaction in the bravery of a tournament and the richness of a banquet board. He was never so pleased as when he wielded lance and sword, or tuned his own harp at a table. In every game he must have a hand, and in war he must be the leader.

On the voyage hither he had lingered the best part of a year to champion the quarrel of his sister with Tancred,

usurper of Sicily; he had exacted a treasure from Tancred, and had made lavish gifts in return. His ships, scattered by a storm, had been ill treated by the Byzantines of Cyprus, and Richard had waded ashore to range the island, until he held the Byzantine prince a captive in silver chains, and his daughter a hostage. In the very cathedral of Cyprus he had married Berengaria of Navarre, his betrothed. Straightway he had embarked again with his bride, attended by his sister and the girl princess of Byzantium, and with new treasure in his coffers. His counselors knew not whether to rejoice in the conquest of a rich island, or whether to bemourn the weeks and the lives wasted in the gaining of it.

Richard himself cared not a jot for statecraft. His great hands were shaped for sword hilt and lance shaft rather than pen or parchment. Recklessly he had sold the royal prerogatives in England to raise money for the crusade. He said he would have sold the city of London, if he could have found a chapman. In his veins ran the blood of Poitiers and Gascony —the hot blood of troubadours and errant princes—and he had lived a voluntary exile from his father's wrath at the French court until the death of his father had brought him the crown of England on the very eve of the crusade. Fastidious, overbearing, and utterly brave, he had lived until now as a prince-adventurer. He had set out upon the crusade as if it were a new and most joyous adventure.

And on the voyage he had mortally offended his careful cousin, Philip, king of France—a youth no more than twenty-six years of age who had already reigned eleven years. A patient and disillusioned soul, cowardly in the face of personal danger, but unyielding where the welfare of his kingdom was at stake. Peering into the future, pondering frontier castles and new laws, even on the crusade, Philip was the exact opposite of his errant cousin of England. Philip had pledged a truce with Richard, but Richard knew that he would break any pledge to gain an advantage. Philip begrudged the crusade that put the careful scheming of years to the hazard. While Richard exulted in the hazard, and baited his timid comrade-enemy with no gentle words.

In these days Philip lingered moodily in his tent, out of

joint with his surroundings, hearing uneasily that in this Holy Land William the Good of Sicily had died, and Frederick duke of Swabia, and the reverend archbishop of Canterbury. His cousin, the count of Flanders, lay dying, and even Richard was touched by the plague. Out of twelve thousand Scandinavians who had come in their ships, not two hundred survived. He heard that here more men fell in a single battle than in a year's campaigning in France. Outside the ditch of the camp, crosses covered the clay knolls—crosses as thick as the stones in the field.

In spite of that the siege engines whirred and crashed through the day and the night, and dust hung about the gray wall of Acre. Great stones soared from the crusaders' *perriers*, falling upon the roofs within the city. From the Moslem engines on the wall, projectiles buried themselves a foot in the earth.

The crusaders had pushed a covered ram over the filled-in fosse, against the base of the wall. And the Moslem engineers cast out dry wood, covering the leather-bound roof of the ram. They shot down Greek fire that caught in the dry wood and burned the ram.

Then the crusaders rolled forward a new tower, higher than the wall, and sheathed with copper. Upon this the Moslems shot clay pots for hours. The pots broke and drenched the structure with a fluid that did not burn. While the men within the tower gibed at them, the defenders went on shooting forth the pots—until a flaming tree trunk was sent spinning through the air against the tower. In an instant, the whole tower burst into flames, roasting alive the men within it. The liquid in the pots had been naphtha.

"These Saracens shut up in the city," the veterans of Acre said to the newcomers, "are people of great and marvelous haughtiness. If they were not miscreants, we would say that we had never seen better men."

And the veterans spoke impatiently to the knights of France and England. "Lord God, when will the assault be given? Here have come the most valiant kings of all Christianity, and the most able in attacking. Let God's will be done!"

While Richard threshed in a fever of eagerness on his pallet—waiting for the arrival of the bulk of his army with the siege engines—Philip-Augustus at length gave the order to make a general assault.

In the morning [says Ambrose] every one armed himself, longing to make the attack. You would not have been able to count all the armed men, all the goodly hauberks, all the shining helms, all the noble horses, all the white caparisonings, all the chosen knights. We had never seen so many distinguished knights, so many pennons, so many ornamented banners. They took their posts and advanced toward the wall and began to launch missiles, and attack.

Before them rumbled the standard of France—a cart drawn by mules, in the cart a staff as high as a minaret, bearing a white banner besprinkled with red, a gilt cross above it. Around the standard pressed a chosen guard of swordsmen.

And that evening the standard rolled back again. The wounded were carried back, and the dead. A great stretch of the wall had been broken down, but smoke signals from Acre had warned the army of Saladin of the attack, and fierce counter-charges by the Moslem horsemen upon the camp had forced the besiegers to turn to defend themselves.

"Good Lord God," the knights cried sorrowfully, "what a poor blow we struck!"

And the harassed Philip-Augustus cried out to his men to avenge him upon the Moslems. For he felt the heat of fever in his veins, and his cousin the count of Flanders lay cold and lifeless in his tent where candles burned and priests watched.

Another fleet put in to the shore, with the last of the French and those two captains of war, Robert earl of Leicester and Andrew of Chavigny, with the best of the English men-at-arms and King Richard's engines. They went into the battle without a day's respite.

For the besiegers, maddened by their losses, fought now without giving or expecting mercy. They numbered nearly one hundred thousand and the broken wall was held against them by no more than six thousand Moslems. Gone were the

days of duels and truces. Newcomers in the camp burned a Moslem prisoner alive within sight of the wall, and the garrison retaliated by burning a crusader at the stake. Day and night the pounding of the engines went on, while the English mined under the Accursed Tower, and the Moslems drove a tunnel out to meet them. In the night Arab swimmers carrying sacks of sulphur and Greek fire on their heads tried to pass the blockading vessels to enter the city; they were caught in fishing nets.

No more pigeons remained to carry news to Saladin, but a swimmer brought out a letter from the weary Meshtub and Karakush, commanders of the city.

"We are reduced," the letter said, "to such weakness that the city will be lost if you can not do something to aid us by the morrow."

On that day, the second of July, the Christians advanced again to attack. And Saladin came down from the hills with all his strength—his *halka*, the veteran guard in yellow cloaks, the cavalry columns of ever-victorious Taki ad Din, the mailed mamluks of Egypt led by Al Adil, his brother. On the flanks rode the wild clans of the northern hills, Turkomans armed with long curved blades and javelins, dark Kurds of the east with their lances and painted shields. Beyond them the Arab tribes hovered like birds of prey, ready to swoop in and snatch up plunder.

Baha ad Din watched Saladin's setting out, at the first dawn.

"This day," the worthy kadi said, "he would eat nothing, and he only drank some cups of liquid when he was urged by his physician. I did not assist at the battle, being kept in my tent at Al Ayadiya by sickness; but from that place I saw it all. Twice did Al Adil charge the enemy in person this day."

He saw Saladin leading the ranks down, as far as the dark line of the Christian trench. He heard a new battle shout: "Ho! Aid for Islam!"

The waves of cavalry swept against the line of the ditch and the mud wall, and broke up into streamlets of men that plied tiny arrows and dismounted to scramble up the *glacis*, sword in hand. Dust rose over the struggling figures, and

other waves of horsemen trotted into the dust, to become little black dots that swarmed forward where the green banners flickered and the drums throbbed ceaselessly.

Al Adil charged and Taki ad Din, and the dervishes ran between the horses, screaming, knives in lean hands, while the imams watching in the hills intoned an endless prayer. "*This day men shall be like scattered moths, and the mountains shall become like flocks of carded wool . . . when the Earth with her quakings shall quake, and men shall say, What aileth her? On this day shall she tell out her tidings. . . .*"

Moslems were breaking through the trench line; they were wielding their swords among the tents, under that veil of dust. They were leaving their horses and breaking through.

Wounded warriors drifted back, dark with sweat and drying blood, rocking in their saddles and shouting the tale of their deeds while the fever of fighting was in them.

They told of Christian bodies filling the trench, so that the horses could gallop upon them like a bridge. "A Frank of enormous size mounted the rampart. His comrades passed stones up to him from behind. He cast the stones down upon us. We struck that man with more than fifty blows of arrows of stones, but could not drive him from his work. He stood against us, struggling, until one of our engineers threw a glass pot of naphtha on him and burned him alive."

Baha ad Din listened to the tales. A veteran of the regular army, an old man and intelligent, came up. He had penetrated through the ditches of the unbelievers.

"Behind their wall," he said, "there was a woman, covered with a green mantle, who kept shooting arrows with a wooden bow. She wounded several of us. She was finally overcome by several men. We killed her and brought her bow to the sultan. He was amazed at this happening."

Hours passed, and the trench line of the Christians held fast. At twilight the Moslem cavalry withdrew from the battle.

Not until night [Baha ad Din relates] did the sultan return to his camp, after the last evening prayer. Broken by fatigue, and a prey to grieving, he slept. But it was not a tranquil sleep. At

daybreak he ordered the drum beaten again. On all sides the soldiers began to form their squadrons and to take up their old tasks.

Richard of England could endure idleness no more. He ordered his attendants to pick up his pallet and to carry him upon it, out to the battle. They carried it to a knoll in the front line, where a hurdle stood, roofed over with wickerwork. Through an opening in the wicker roof Richard could watch the wall of Acre, and the battered summit of the Accursed Tower at the angle where the English were attacking.

Raising himself on his elbow, the sick king listened to the whir and thud of the great engines and the clang of iron darts —the rending of wood and the clatter of steel weapons. But he could not lie there inactive while the assault went on. Calling for his crossbow—a weapon that he handled with rare skill—he began to speed his quarrels through the opening of the bombproof.

That day the English fired the beams of the tunnel they had thrust down, under the foundations of the square tower. Smoke oozed up through the holes in the earth. Slowly the tower inclined outward: it settled into the earth and leaned toward the besiegers, but it did not fall.

Richard summoned a herald to him. "Two gold byzants to the man who brings me a stone from yonder tower!" he said, and the trumpeter proclaimed it from the knoll beside him.

The men within hearing looked at the leaning tower, still manned by Moslem archers, and hung back. The king offered three and then four gold pieces for a stone, and groups of the English dropped their arms to run forward with iron bars and hammers, under the speeding arrows.

Some of them were shot down, and others fled; but several pried stones from the tower's base and staggered back with them to the king.

At twilight the Accursed Tower still stood. Through the hours of darkness men labored around it like ghouls in a great cemetery of stones. From the Christian lines they

crept forward to throw the bodies of their dead comrades into the maw of the half-filled fosse. Thither they dragged carcases of horses, beams, and rocks. With sword and ax other shadows of men stood guard over them.

Peering into the haze of moonlight, helmeted archers on the broken wall above them shot at the moving shadows. From the yawning breaches of the wall barefoot Moslems, wraiths tortured by hunger and lack of sleep, stole out and felt their way along the darkness of the fosse. They carried axes and long knives and when they came to the body of a man or the stiffened cadaver of a horse they hacked at the limbs until they could wrench them off and pass them back to other laborers, who carried their burden back into the alleys of Acre, and cast them into the sea.

So, under the impassive moon, shadows worked to fill up the great ditch, while others toiled to clear it.

The Accursed Tower was down at last, in clouds of smoke and drifting dust. A wide hole gaped in the angle of the gray city wall. And, as ants swarm forth to mend a break in the clay barrier of an ant hill, weary men thronged from the city to tug stones into place, one upon the other—to build a barricade out of dismembered bodies and the broken beams of engines; while other figures ran into the settling dust, to tear apart the barricade. With them went the banners of Leicester and Chavigny and the good bishop of Salisbury. Sword in hand, they climbed over the stones, smiting and hacking and pressing on. From straining throats came a hoarse cry:

"Christ and the Sepulcher!"

Through the barricade they broke, stumbling and falling under the arrows that sped down from the heights around them. Back to back they stood in the welter of human bodies, their long arms lashing around them. The banners rose in the breach, and the distant watchers shouted:

"St. George for England!"

One figure pushed ahead of the others. A knight, Aubery Clément, had sworn that he would enter Acre or die that day. And he went down under a counter-charge of desperate

Turks, who fought with knives and broken swords to hold the breach until others came up with flame throwers.

Sheets of flame licked out at the attackers, and burning naphtha drenched them. Scorched and tortured, men who would have stood their ground against steel fell back into the débris of the fosse, or stumbled clear of the wall. So were the English beaten back from the breach while the tired Turks shouted in mockery.

But it was the last of the fire and almost the last of the garrison's strength.

On Friday, the twelfth of July, a swimmer from the city reached the outer shore and was brought to Saladin, with a letter from the commanders in Acre.

The letter [Baha ad Din explains] showed that the garrison was reduced to its last extremity—too weak to defend the breach which was very great. Only death awaited them, and they did not doubt that all of them would be massacred if the city were carried by assault. So they had made a treaty to surrender the place.

After reading it, Saladin summoned his officers at once to council in the field. When they had talked together, the sultan called the swimmer again and gave him a message disapproving the terms of the treaty.

Saladin left the council without speaking to any one. That night he remained sitting in troubled abstraction, when all at once we saw fires lighted on the wall of the city—and the banners and crosses of the enemy. Their fires of joy lighted all the rampart.

Acre had fallen.

XXI

THE MASSACRE

With the surrender of the city a change came over the survivors of the Christian host. Under the burning midsummer sun the siege engines were left standing unattended, like captive giants bound with ropes and chains, and now at last permitted to repose in peace. And the men who had labored for months without respite put aside their armor and drank of idleness as a thirst-ridden traveler quaffs deep of wine in the cool of the evening.

They took possession of their old quarters in the city, and watched the throng of Moslem prisoners working with brushes and pails of water, scrubbing the whitewash from the walls of the cathedral that had been a mosque. Under the white coating appeared the familiar mosaic figures of the saints, as if they had been waiting there these four years to welcome the Christians.

The great army of Christians felt the relaxation from the strain; it slept fitfully at first and then heavily, dulling the memory of pain and agonizing losses. It tried not to think of the graves that covered the plain—graves that held the bodies of three reigning princes, six archbishops and patri-

archs, forty counts, and five hundred men of noble rank. And perhaps eighty thousand common men.[1] The price paid for Acre had been too great, but the survivors of the host felt that victory now lay with them, and that surely now the way was open to Jerusalem.

Meanwhile, relaxing, the men who put aside their armor became individuals again with ambitions and grievances of their own. The men-at-arms settled old debts and went out to look for taverns. Courtly dress appeared again in the streets, where esquires rode in attendance upon their ladies. Other women came down from Tyre, and of nights the tinkling of gitterns, the clinking of cups, and the melody of the troubadours could be heard.

And the leaders assembled in a great council to settle the question of the kingship of Jerusalem that had divided them into two factions. No idle question this—for in the hand of the king lay the authority of God.

In this council sat Philip-Augustus in his somber dress, his young face prematurely lined. Beside him the long-limbed Richard, in a rose-hued vest and hunting cap, his great sword in its plain sheath linked to his girdle with silver. He played with the staff in his hand, alert and amused—eager to have his say in the controversy. Behind him, the quiet earl of Leicester, and Henry, count of Champagne—nephew of the two kings but a poor man. "Living from morning to morning," the chroniclers say.

With the English sat the Templars in their white surcoats, and the three brothers Lusignan—Guy, the king in name; Geoffrey, the warrior; and Amalric, the constable.

With the French were the dark-faced Pisans, and the nobleman who had caused the quarrel, Conrad of Montserrat, inscrutable, unyielding, and swift to seize upon any gain.

He had already scored a decisive advantage over the help-

[1]Accounts of the numbers involved and the losses vary widely. Moslem chroniclers say that 120,000 Christians died at Acre. It is possible—judging from the totals given for the various contingents as they arrived—that 150,000 landed at Acre. From the heavy casualties among the leaders and well-known knights, it seems that the losses amounted to one half the army. Such losses would be the equivalent of a million men to-day. And they do not include the casualties of the German host in Asia Minor.

less Guy. A year ago Queen Sibyl, the bride of Lusignan, had died in the camp. By the ruling of the high court of the barons in such a case, the younger sister of the dead woman succeeded to the throne. But Isabel was married—during that stormy evening at Kerak—to the mild and unkingly Humphrey of Toron. Isabel, only twenty years of age, insisted that she loved Humphrey, and she refused to be separated from him. But her mother and Conrad's agents beset her, troubling the girl's conscience by insinuating that her marriage to Humphrey was no marriage because it had taken place before her age of puberty. She yielded at last, and the Church declared the marriage null. Whereupon Conrad claimed her and wedded her and at once demanded recognition of his right to the throne of Jerusalem, since Isabel was now the queen.

There were ugly whispers that the marquis already had a wife in Constantinople, with another at home in Italy. "In reserve," explains Ambrose, who hated him. "And now he married a third! That is why the good archbishop did not fear to say that God was not present at such a wedding."

All these remonstrances the ambitious Italian brushed aside. The daring Geoffrey, brother of Guy, cast down his gauntlet before the marquis and Conrad ignored it. The Templars insisted that Guy was the rightful king, but Conrad gained the ear of Philip-Augustus—even persuaded that thoughtful monarch to claim half of Richard's conquest of the rich island of Cyprus. (The careless Richard had accepted Guy's side of the quarrel, and, while he gave up the half of Cyprus, he opposed Philip-Augustus in the matter of the kingship. The crusade had fanned the latent enmity between the twain, and Richard openly sought the leadership of the army.)

Now in the great council the cause was debated gravely—for the kingship of Jerusalem was perhaps the highest of earthly honors—and a compromise was reached.

Guy would have the kingdom during his lifetime, after which it would fall to the marquis or his son. If Conrad died first, King Richard would dispose of the kingdom as he pleased, if he were still in the East.

So they agreed. Two things are clear. The barons of Jerusalem no longer had in their hands the choosing of the king, as in the time of the first Baldwin; and the politics of the West had crept into the East. Of all the high lords who sat in that council, only Balian of Ibelin and Humphrey of Toron belonged to the lineage of the first crusaders. The Templars had great influence, but the leadership of the crusade now lay between the kings of France and England, supported as they were by the powerful princes of Europe.

After the council Philip-Augustus announced his decision. Richard's knight errantry had exhausted his patience, perhaps, but he longed to take advantage of the death of the count of Flanders and to have the first hand in affairs at home. Under the excuse of illness, he meant to sail back to France at once.

Naturally, the French contingents protested, and the other barons urged him to abide until the end of the war. The politic king did consent to leave at Acre the bulk of his soldiers under command of the duke of Burgundy. He would not stay. So great was his desire to make haste that he begged two swift galleys from Richard.

No protest came from Richard, although even that single-minded warrior scented danger in the wind. Before the high lords he made Philip-Augustus swear that he would keep the faith he had pledged to him and would do no injury to the vassals or the lands of England, while Richard was absent.

The king of France took the oath readily, and broke it as readily before the year was out.

"Instead of blessings," says Ambrose, "maledictions followed him upon his departure."

Be that as it may, Richard Plantagenet was happy—well and hale once more, with no one to hinder him and all Palestine open to him. Alone Conrad dared question his acts, and Conrad, following a policy of his own, saw fit to retire into his citadel of Tyre, taking with him the Moslem hostages who had fallen to the share of the French king; nor would he emerge at the Lion Heart's summons.

For better or worse Richard became leader of the crusade.

His unbounded energy brought new spirit into the war, and the first result of it was the massacre.

Acre had surrendered upon hard terms. To save their lives Saladin's generals in the city had agreed to the surrender of the place with all it held, to the payment of a ransom of 200,000 pieces of gold, to the release by Saladin of 1,600 Christian captives—100 knights selected by name among them—and to the return of the holy cross.

Saladin had been troubled when he learned the conditions. The fulfilment of course rested with him, since some three thousand of the garrison with the two commanders were held as hostages by the crusaders. He had asked what time would be allowed him to make the payment, and had been informed that he would have three months—one third of the conditions to be met at the end of each month.

Now the first month had elapsed, and the crusaders were eagerly awaiting the sight of the true cross, taken at the battle of Hattin. Whenever Moslem parties appeared near Acre, men ran out crying:

"The cross is coming!"

But it did not come. Instead Saladin sent a message, explaining that he was ready to meet the first payment if the Christians would give hostages on their part to guarantee that they would release the prisoners at the end.

Richard, in refusing this, demanded that Saladin make the payment without any conditions.[1] Days passed, and no response came from the hills. We do not know what Saladin thought, or what he was preparing to do. Doubtless he distrusted the crusaders, and probably he was waiting for the arrival of some of the captives.

[1]Baha ad Din, who was in a position to know, but who was naturally prejudiced against the crusaders, gives the following version of Saladin's response:

"Of two things, do one. Send back to us our comrades (the captives of the garrison) and receive the amount of the payment agreed upon for this term; then we will give you hostages for all that is agreed upon for the following terms. Or accept what we will make over to you to-day and give us hostages whom we will keep until our comrades, held by you, have been sent out to us."

He says the Frank envoys answered:

"We will do none of that. Pay what is due now, and accept our solemn oath that your people will be returned to you."

But there is no doubt as to what Richard did. Calling a council of the princes in Acre, he discussed the situation and came to a decision. Twenty-six hundred Moslems of the garrison were led out into the plain to a kind of enclosure of blankets hung upon cords. Their hands were bound and they were put to death by the sword—or hung—within sight of the Moslem patrols watching from the hills. Of all the hostages only the higher officers were spared.

In a frenzy of anger all the Moslem cavalry within summons rode down at the crusaders, and before the execution ended swords were clashing all over the plain. Eventually the Moslems withdrew, to carry the tidings to Saladin.

Beyond doubt, he had not expected this. The massacre depressed him deeply, and not for many a long day did he show mercy to any crusaders taken captive. He did not, however, retaliate by a slaughter of the Christians already in his hands.

Richard's callous act roused intense feeling among the Moslems. By the letter of the agreement he had the right to act as he did. It must be remembered also that the crusaders were still afflicted by their losses at Acre—that the majority of them, arriving on the coast during the tension of the siege, still looked upon their enemies as infidels to be slaughtered wherever met. Granting this, the fact remains that Richard stained his name and honor by this needless cruelty, and that Saladin did not retaliate except in the open war that followed.

The slaughter had its afternote of comedy. The two Moslem commanders of Acre were held for individual ransom—Meshtub, chieftain of the Kurds, being kept for 8,000 pieces of gold, while Karakush was thought by the crusaders to be worth 30,000. It occurred to Meshtub to ask the figure set for the ransom of his brother-in-arms, and his captors told him.

"I am worth as much as he," Meshtub protested. "By God, Karakush will not bring 30,000 pieces if I bring only eight."

The knights laughed, and raised the old Kurd's ransom to 30,000 pieces.

Meanwhile Richard was preparing to march on Jerusalem.

By common consent the crusaders placed themselves under his orders, although he had been on the coast for only two months. As king of England he was of higher birth than the remaining lords, and the command lay with him by right; but Richard Plantagenet would have taken the lead of any army in which he served.

It is no easy matter to perceive the real Richard, to separate him from the minstrelsy of the centuries. We would like to know the exact nature of the man who was called the Lion Heart, but the lines of portraiture are indistinct—scarred and dimmed by time. This much we know. Richard was born late in life to Eleanor of Guinne, who had been the queen of Louis, one of the leaders of the crusade of 1149—Eleanor whose wilfulness preyed upon this monarch of the French until Louis abandoned the crusade and divorced her. No untoward fortune could dishearten the beautiful Eleanor, who chose for her second husband Henry of Anjou, cunning, passionate, and cruel. She could don man's garments and go out against adversity; she dared rebel against her husband after he had been anointed king of England. Henry, able enough in all conscience, defied the Church of Rome, and went to his death with his sons in arms against him and the stigma of Herod upon him, after the murder of good Thomas à Becket. The children grew up amid turmoil and the quarrels of the courts, tasting of vice at an early age. John, weak and covetous, inherited his father's nature, while Richard had his mother's comeliness and dominant will. He was her favorite.

We have only glimpses of him, matching songs with the troubadours of Poitiers, standing silent beside his father's body, without a word of blame or promise of good-will to the English barons who had fought against him. He plunges into the crusade, as if longing to bury all this futile past in a selfless venture; he desires Berengaria of Navarre for wife, and yet sails from Messina on the very eve of her expected arrival in the charge of Eleanor. And after their marriage he avoids her—places her with Joanna his sister, rescued from Sicily, and the fair Byzantine girl, daughter of the Comnene, held by him as hostage.

Seemingly he takes delight in the young Byzantine prin-

cess—perhaps makes her his mistress. Berengaria follows him without protest, silent in her pride. The three women—shadows behind the resplendent figure of the crusader king—are housed with all splendor in the palace at Acre. They appear at banquets, and Richard takes pleasure in gifting them with luminous silks and rare Eastern jewels.

He is no whit dismayed by the losses at Acre or the desertion of Philip. The thing in hand engrosses him, and he exults in the preparations for the march, buying new soldiery from the French, inspecting the ships. He can order the slaying of the Moslem hostages, and still send requests to Saladin for food for his falcons. He is childishly disappointed that the sultan will not meet him face to face in courteous talk before the coming battle. Passing from hunting field to the banquet table, jesting with men of all ranks, spurring on the laggards, beating down all opposition—such is the outward bearing of the man, on the eve of the struggle.

At times he is moody, and over-tensed nerves give way before little things. He has a Norman's canniness, and never did crusader cast such stakes upon the board as Richard. To come thus far, he has drained England and left his kingdom at hazard. He means no doubt to win such fortune and glory in the Holy Land that he may return and mend matters in the West. But he finds great powers opposing him at every step, and he is impatient.

So for a moment the two adversaries gather their strength for the coming struggle—the champion of the West preparing to go forth to meet the lord of the nearer East. In every quality they are opposed: Saladin has the clear vision of age, Richard the heedlessness of youth; Saladin is patient, Richard impetuous; Saladin, unable to take part in person in the fighting, relies upon generalship; Richard depends upon his own prowess in battle. The sultan, a fatalist, will take long chances—he has men fit only for striking, not for defense; the king must feel the ground before each new step, but he has men equally effective in attack or defense.

Either of them would give his life to hold, or to take, Jerusalem.

Richard made the first move, a wise one. Instead of seek-

ing Saladin or marching inland, he started down the coast with the fleet following after him, toward Jaffa, the port of Jerusalem. A distance of some sixty-five miles as the crow flies, rather more than a hundred along the trails. He set out on August twenty-fifth of that year 1191 during the worst of the heat when the streams were dry.

Saladin kept in touch with his movements by spies and by mounted patrols. He ordered the walls of the three towns between Acre and Jaffa dismantled, and the fortifications of that seaport destroyed. And he marched south beside the crusaders, out of sight within the hills.

XXII

RICHARD TAKES THE FIELD

At first the Christian army did not move smoothly. In fact, it did not move at all. Acre sheltered a great multitude, speaking different languages and following different leaders. For weeks this multitude had rested in the shade of the poplars and the palm groves.

"In the town," Ambrose explains, "were good wines and girls, many of whom were very fair. They gave themselves up to the wine and the women until the valiant men were ashamed of the others."

Richard had to pitch his tents by the sand dunes of the river and send back his marshals to rout out the malingerers. They emerged peevishly, overburdened with baggage. And onsets of Moslem cavalry added to the confusion. For two days the crusaders camped in the shadow of Mount Carmel—from the summit of which Saladin had been inspecting them—while the useless gear was discarded and the men formed into companies. All women except hardy workers were sent back, and each man was given ten days' supplies of biscuit, cereal, wine, and meat to carry in a pack. This done, the great standard, an effigy of a dragon mounted upon an iron-

bound pole in a heavy cart, trundled forward within its guard of Norman swordsmen. With the Templars leading, the army crawled around the point of Carmel in close array.

Ambrose marched with them, delighted at the sight.

You would see there great chivalry,
The fairest younglings,
The chosen men, most proud,
That ever were beheld.
So many men, all confident,
So many fine armorings,
And old sergeants, hardy and proud,
So many swords fair seeming,
So many banners gleaming—
You would see there a host afoot,
Greatly to be feared.

Burdened by the heavy packs, the army trudged through the dry brush and thickets of the shore, surprised to see so many animals scurrying away before it. Scorpions and snakes worried the newcomers, and every day before setting out the sun emerged from the ridge on the left hand, making a glaring furnace of the sky, reflecting on the sand and even touching the tranquil green sea with fire. The army clambered past the limestone ledges of the Narrow Way, fearing that the Moslems would beset it.

But the sand and the brush lay empty before it, as far as the ruins of Capernaum. The army advanced only a few miles each day, halting at an early hour to camp. When the men had eaten supper, and the sun had sunk beneath red clouds into a purple sea, the air became cool and they could sit at ease. Then one would arise, and call out the familiar words:

"Holy Sepulcher, aid us!"

Others would take up the cry after him, repeating it as far as the outer lines where the silent Templars kept watch in mounted patrols. Ambrose said it refreshed them all—as did the sight of the stalwart Richard by day, mounted on Fauvel, his bay Cyprian horse.

The army trudged on, down the silent coast where no sheep grazed, and no wind stirred the dust, and even the thickets were gray and salt and bitter. At the empty town of Caesarea the fleet appeared, moving slowly under listless airs over the tideless water. It brought supplies and the last laggards from Acre.

The army [a chronicle relates] pitched its tents by a river called the River of Crocodiles, because the crocodiles devoured two soldiers who bathed in it. Caesarea is great in size, and the buildings wonderful in workmanship. Our Savior with His disciples often visited it and worked miracles there. But the Turks had broken down part of the towers and walls.

Here the army turned a little inland—for the line of the menacing hills had receded, and the leaders decided to follow the wells and cultivated land a few miles from the shore. (And here, Baha ad Din relates, Saladin made a survey of the country ahead of the crusaders and talked for a long time apart with his brother Al Adil.)

On leaving Caesarea the Moslem cavalry appeared, skirmishing with the rear guard and harassing the crusaders with arrows. But Richard or his advisers had hit upon a formation that fairly baffled the eager foemen.

The crusaders marched in three columns. The one nearest the hills—and the Moslems—was formed entirely of infantry, in close order. Those in the outer files exposed to the Moslem arrows carried bows and crossbows and wore shirts of felt and mail. They worked their bows without halting, and their armor shielded them from the hostile arrows. Within these files, their comrades carried spears and swords in readiness to stand and beat off a charge.

The second column, within the infantry screen, was made up of the knights and horsemen, the real strength of the army—protected in this fashion from the arrows that would otherwise have taken toll of the valuable horses.

Nearest the sea and remote from the Moslems marched the third column with the carts and baggage and sick. These men could take their ease, and a division of them changed

places every few hours with the infantry of the first column, who could then rest in their turn.

The fighting of the first day ended at noon when both sides wilted under the trying heat. The crusaders kept on, across a barren stretch of sand dunes, and came to a narrow ravine, a portion of which the Moslems had thoughtfully camouflaged with a screen of branches to trap the horsemen of the advance. But the Templars were not deceived, and after testing the water and finding it good, they camped there. The river they christened the Dead River.

On the next day [the chronicle continues] the army went on slowly through a desolate country. The Templars had charge of the rear that day and they lost so many horses through the attacks of the Turks, they were almost reduced to despair. The king also was wounded in the side by a javelin while he was driving the Turks. Alas, how many horses fell pierced with javelins! This terrible tempest kept up all day, until at twilight the Turks returned to their tents.

Our people stopped near what was called the Salt River. A great throng gathered on account of the horses which had died from their wounds, for the people were so eager to purchase the horseflesh that they even came to blows. The king, hearing this, proclaimed by herald that he would give a live horse to whoever had lost his horse and who distributed the flesh of it to the best men in his command, who had most need of it.

On the third day our army marched in battle array from the Salt River; for there was a rumor that the Turks were lying in ambush in a forest, and that they meant to set the brush on fire. But our men, advancing in order, passed the place unmolested where the ambuscade was said to be. On quitting the wood they came to a large plain and there they pitched their tents. Spies, however, brought back word that the Turks lay ahead of them in countless numbers.

Saladin had inspected this plain with Al Adil, and had chosen it for the hazard of battle. In the last two days his horsemen had tried to coax the crusaders' cavalry out of the protecting mass of infantry, and had failed.

We had to admire [Baha ad Din says] the patience shown by these people, who endured the worst fatigues without having military skill or any advantage on their side.

The Moslems, being all mounted, outnumbered the crusaders' horsemen at least five to one. Their purpose was to induce the men of the cross to break their array—to abandon the hedgehog-like formation and to scatter over the countryside, in which case the charges of the Turkish cavalry might overwhelm them. Richard, understanding this peril, had ordered his men not to move out of ranks under any provocation unless the signal was given to charge—the simultaneous blast of trumpets down the line.

So on that day of battle the Christians moved forward in their dense column, like an armored giant drawing himself painfully over the ground, heedless of the sting of missiles.

The Templars took the advance again, followed by the Bretons and the knights of Anjou; King Guy led the men of Poitou at their heels, and the Normans and English pressed after with the standard. Bearing the burden of the attack, the black-robed Hospitalers held the rear. At nine o'clock, when the crusaders were already drenched with sweat, the two sides were engaged—swarms of Bedawins and the negro horsemen of Egypt assailing the rear.

King Richard and the duke of Burgundy with their retinues rode up and down the line, to steady the men.

The enemy [relates the chronicler De Vinsouf] thundered at their backs as if with mallets, so that, having no room to use their bows, they fought hand to hand, and the blows of the Turks, echoing from their metal armor, resounded as if they had struck upon an anvil. They were now tormented with the heat, and no rest was allowed them. The battle fell heavily on the extreme line of the Hospitalers—the more so as they were unable to resist.

They moved forward with patience under their wounds, and the Turks cried out that they were iron, and would yield to no blow. Then about twenty thousand Turks rushed upon our men. Almost overcome by their savage fury Garnier de Napes, one of the Hospitalers, suddenly exclaimed with a loud voice,

"O St. George, wilt thou leave us to be driven thus?"

Upon this the master of the Hospitalers went to the king and said to him, "My lord the king, we are pressed by the enemy, and in danger of eternal infamy; we are losing our horses, one after the other, and why should we bear with them?"

"Good Master," the king replied, "it is you who must sustain their attack. No one can be everywhere at once."

On the master returning, there was not a count or prince who did not blush for shame, and they said one to the other, "Why do we not charge them at full gallop?"

Thereupon two knights who were impatient of delay put everything in confusion. They rushed at full gallop upon the Turks and each of them overthrew his man, by piercing him with his lance. One of them was the marshal of the Hospitalers, the other was Baldwin de Carreo, a good and brave man and the companion of King Richard.[1]

When the other Christians observed these two rushing forward, and heard them calling with a clear voice on St. George for aid, they charged the Turks in a body with all their strength; then the Hospitalers who had been distressed all day by their close array, following the two soldiers, charged the enemy in troops—so that the van of the army became the rear and the Hospitalers who had been the last became the first.

The count of Champagne also burst forward with his chosen company, and James d'Avesnes with his kinsmen, and the bishop of Beauvais, as well as the earl of Leicester, who made a fierce charge on the left, toward the sea. The Turks, who had dismounted from their horses in order to take better aim at our men with their javelins and arrows, were slain on all sides in that charge, for, being overthrown by the horsemen, they were killed by the footmen who followed.

King Richard, on seeing his army in motion, flew on his horse through the Hospitalers, and broke into the Turkish infantry, who were astonished at his blows and those of his men, and gave way to the right and the left. Then might be seen numbers prostrate on the ground, horses in swarms without their riders, and many trodden under foot by friend and foe. Oh, how different is battle from the speculations of those who meditate amid the columns of the cloisters!

There the fierce king, the extraordinary king, cut down the Turks; wherever he turned, he cut a wide path for himself, like a

[1]Baha ad Din saw this charge. "The enemy found himself more and more entangled, and the Moslems became expectant of victory. Then their cavalry formed in a mass, and knowing that nothing could save them but a mighty effort, they charged. . . . I saw, myself, these horsemen gathered in the circle formed by the infantry; all at once they seized their lances and gave a great war shout; the line of infantry opened to let them pass, and they cast themselves forward."

reaper with his sickle. The rest, warned by the sight, gave him wide room.

For a long time the battle was doubtful. Oh, how many banners might be seen, torn and fallen to the earth; how many swords of proved steel covering the ground! Some of the Turks hid themselves in copses, others climbed the trees, and, being shot with arrows, fell with a groan to the earth; others, abandoning their horses, betook themselves to slippery foot paths. For a space of two miles nothing could be seen but fugitives.

Our men paused, but the fugitives, to the number of twenty thousand, when they saw this, recovered their courage and charged the hindmost of our men who were retiring. Oh, how dreadfully were our men then pressed! They bent, stunned, to their saddle bows. Then you might have seen horses without saddles, and the Turks returning upon our people. The commander of the Turks was an admiral,[1] Tekedmus, a kinsman of the sultan; he had seven hundred Turks of great valor from the household troops of Saladin, each of whose companies bore a yellow banner. These men, coming at full charge with haughty bearing, attacked our men so that even the firmness of our leaders wavered under the weight of the pressure. The battle raged fiercer than before—the one side labored to crush, the other to repel.

For all that, the king, mounted on a bay Cyprian steed, scattered those he met, while helmets tottered beneath his sword. The enemy gave way before his sword, and thus our men, having suffered somewhat, returned to the standard.

They proceeded on their march as far as Arsuf, and there they pitched their tents outside its walls. While they were thus engaged, a large body of the Turks made an attack upon the extreme rear of our army. King Richard with only fifteen companions rushed against these Turks, crying out in a loud voice, "Aid us, O Sepulcher!" When our men heard it, they made haste to follow him, and attacked the Turks, putting them to flight.

Overcome with the fatigues of the day, our men rested quietly that night. Whoever wished to plunder returned to the field of battle, and those who returned thence reported that they had counted thirty-two Turkish chieftains slain. The Turks also made search for them.

But we had to mourn greatly the loss of James d'Avesnes. On Sunday the Hospitalers and knights of the Temple armed them-

[1]An amir—probably Taki ad Din.

selves and made anxious search, and at last found the body, its face so covered with clotted blood that it was difficult of recognition. Thus, having decently wrapped up the body, they bore it back to Arsuf whence a great multitude of the soldiers came forth to meet it.

So ended Saladin's attempt to break the array of the crusaders in open battle. The sallying forth of two knights, against Richard's orders, took the Moslems by surprise, and the charge of the Christian chivalry swept all the Moslem divisions back against the hills with heavy losses. In this charge the men of Islam experienced for the first time the astonishing might of the Lion Heart, and Malik Ric gained for himself a place in Moslem legendry that endures even to-day.

But counter-charges led by Taki ad Din and others made the crusaders retire into their close order, and move on without delay to the sheltering gardens of the little seaport of Arsuf. On the following day Saladin appeared, ready to renew the action, while the crusaders did not take the field.

This affair of Arsuf was hardly a battle, and certainly not a decisive battle, as some historians have made it out, in the past. It did prove, however, that the crusaders under Richard's leadership could hold their own in ranged battle against Saladin's forces, and it lowered the morale of the Moslem soldiery. And it caused Saladin and his generals to change their plan of campaign. Instead of hanging on the flank of the Christians to draw them into action, Saladin retired to the line of the hills and divided his forces, determined to play for time.

To do this he destroyed instead of defending Ascalon, the Bride of Syria. Ascalon, the southern key to Jerusalem and to the caravan route into Egypt, was a great and fair seaport, but the Moslem amirs were in no mood to shut themselves up in another Acre, to defend it.

"I take God to witness," Saladin said, "I would rather lose all my children than cast down a stone from its walls, but—it is necessary."

He drove his men to the grim work, recruiting an army of workmen.

When these laborers entered the city [Baha ad Din relates] there went up a great sound of grieving; for the city was pleasant to look upon; its walls were strong, its houses beautiful. Its people began at once to sell everything they could not bear away with them into Egypt, even selling ten hens for one dirhem. They came out to the camp with their wives and children, to sell their household things. Some had to go off on foot, lacking money to hire beasts to carry them. The troops, worn out with fatigue, spent that night in their tents. This was a horrible time.

From early morning the sultan busied himself in the work of tearing down. He gave all the corn stored in the city to the workmen. They set fire to the houses of the city. All the towers were filled with wood and burned.

For two days the sultan was so ill that he could not ride or take any food. He shifted the camp close to the walls, which enabled the camel and ass drivers to share in the work. For he feared that the Franks would hear of it and come down to forestall him.

XXIII

THE BARRIER OF THE HILLS

RICHARD's impetuous spirit was fired by the withdrawal of the Moslems. "Seigneurs," he cried in the first conference at Jaffa, "the Turks are destroying Ascalon —they dare not give battle to us. Let us go, to save this city."

But they did not go. The banners were planted in the olive groves, swept by the dry north wind. The horses grazed hungrily in the fertile fields by the canals, and the men ate eagerly of the ripe grapes and fresh figs and almonds. They rested, in Jaffa—some of them even went back by boat to the flesh-pots of Acre—and debated what ought to be done. It seemed to them that the wall of Jaffa must be repaired first.

And Richard, so skilled in battle, so certain of himself in the face of the enemy, could not sway the minds of the council. Impatiently his thoughts turned to the great leaders of the Moslems, off yonder behind the haze of dust that half veiled the brown rampart of the hills. He sent an envoy for Al Adil, the counselor and brother of the sultan. Al Adil came, courteous and watchful, at the head of a brilliant cortège of horsemen. Richard rode out to meet him, attended by Norman knights, with youthful Humphrey of Toron to interpret for him.

"The war," he said, "has lasted a long time between us. On both sides a multitude of brave warriors have fallen. As for us, we are come only to aid the Franks of this coast. Make peace with them, and the two armies will retire, each into its own country."

Al Adil was apt at this fencing with words. Quietly he demanded upon what terms the Christians would make peace, and Richard, perforce, answered—saying that Jerusalem must be yielded up, and the Moslems must retire beyond the Jordan. With pride, Al Adil refused.

This meeting was reported at once to Saladin, and he wrote to his brother, "Try to drag out matters longer with the Franks and keep them where they are, until the Turkoman reinforcements which are on the way have joined us."

So Al Adil, summoned again by the English king, brought a great pavilion with him, and gifts of camels and saddled horses, and his cooks with a store of dainties. Not to be outdone in courtesy, Richard ordered forward his own tent, and the two feasted therein—the Moslem cooks fetching their dishes into the crusader's quarters. Richard prepared the feast with splendor and returned gift for gift.

Quite frankly he admired Al Adil, finding that this lord of the pagans who could tell a merry tale or eat a whole sheep at a sitting knew all the lore of hunt and falconry—that his pride was not less than Norman pride. Such a man could entertain the Lion Heart more than the wayward French barons, or the monkish Templars who labored at the stones of Jaffa. Thereafter Richard often sent to the Moslem chieftain for sherbet or—when fever settled upon him—snow from the distant peak of Hermon. Always Al Adil responded courteously, while he studied Richard.

Months later Richard was to make a friendly gesture in recognition of Al Adil's courtesy.[1] He sent for the elder son of the Moslem prince and knighted him with all solemnity before the Christian lords. For the present, however, his

[1]The incident in Scott's novel, of Saladin's visit in the disguise of a physician to Richard's tent, is, of course, fiction, as it was meant to be. The king and the sultan never met, in truce or on the field of battle. There is no evidence that Saladin sent his physician to minister to the English king, but he did send gifts of fruit and snow during Richard's illness.

restless mind played with a new project that fairly took Al Adil's breath away.

It seemed to the English king that a marriage might mend all the questions at issue—the marriage of his sister Joanna to the cultured and affable Al Adil. This done, he—on behalf of the crusaders—and Saladin—on behalf of the Moslems—would surrender their mutual holdings in the Holy Land to the new couple and Jerusalem would be held in peace by both sides, with pilgrims at liberty to come and go. The true cross would be returned to the crusaders. So Richard suggested, apparently with all sincerity. Al Adil was a little dazzled when he reported the offer to his brother.

"Wilt thou accept?" Baha ad Din asked the sultan curiously.

"Yes, verily," Saladin said, thrice—and smiled. He knew the thing to be impossible, and eventually Richard had to announce that his sister refused to marry a Moslem.

Not that Richard was idle. The skirmishing going on between the horsemen of both sides gave full opportunity for the individual combats that delighted him. He went out with a small following to look for hostile patrols and ride them down.

The king of England [Ambrose explains] went out to meet the Saracens, hoping to surprise them, but once the thing turned out badly. The king had too few with him, and it happened that he went to sleep.

The Saracens were on their guard, and approached so near that he was barely awakened in time. Seigneurs, do not be surprised if he got up in great haste—for a single man beset by so many is not at ease. But the grace of God enabled him to mount his horse: his people mounted also, but they were too few. When the Turks saw them in the saddle they turned and fled to their ambuscade, pursued by the king. Those who were hidden in the ambush rushed out and tried to seize the king upon his horse Fauvel, but he drew his sword.

All around him the Turks pressed—each one wishing to put hand on him but no one wishing to feel the blow of his sword. If they had known who he was, they would have taken him. But one of his knights, William of Priux a loyal man and proud, cried out, "I am

the *malik*." That is to say, the king. The Turks seized him at once and carried him off to their army.

There were killed Renier de Maron, who had a valiant heart, and his nephew. Alan and Lucas of the Stable were killed also—that is the truth. No one pursued the Turks, for they went away in a great body, leading William a captive.

When God had thus spared the king, several, knowing his courage and being fearful for him, begged of him:

"Sire, for God, do not thus! It is not your affair to go on such expeditions. You lack not brave men—do not go forth alone on such occasions, for all our lives depend upon you."

More than one valiant man took pain to beseech him. But he, when he heard of a combat—and very little could be hidden from him—he cast himself always against the Turks.

Once the Templars were guarding the foragers, when four squadrons of Turks fell upon them with loose bridles. The combat was at its height when King Richard arrived. He saw our people surrounded by the pagans. He had only a few with him, but valiant men and chosen, several of whom said to him:

"In truth, Sire, you risk a great misfortune. Never can you bring our people out of there, and it is better that they die than that you perish with them."

The king changed color, and said, "I have sent them thither—I asked them to go. If they die there without me, may I never again be called king!"

He gave his horse the spurs and loosened the rein; swifter than a hawk he cast himself at the Saracens, and broke through them to the center. He drove them back, returning on his track to strike them again, severing their heads and arms. They fled like beasts. Many who could not flee were taken or killed. Our men pursued them so long that it was the hour to return to camp.

Some men, however, blamed him because of the presents he had accepted from the pagans. But he would have delivered the Holy Land if he had not been prevented.

October had passed, and November, while Jaffa was rebuilt and fresh contingents summoned up from Acre. The orange groves around Jaffa were heavy with fruit, and the feather grass blew brittle over the plain, under cloudy skies. Along the line of the hills the dust veil whirled when the north wind blew.

Little by little the crusaders had penetrated the plain,

quartering themselves in dismantled towers and riding into the empty towns. They had gained the edge of the foothills, and before them the road to Jerusalem ascended among barren gullies twisting and turning around the shoulders of the hills toward the Holy City, hidden from sight twelve miles distant.

But they had delayed too long. Rain came on the heels of the wind, and chilled the air. The bulk of the crusaders expected to march forward to Jerusalem, while the leaders, realizing the difficulties, had no plan at all, and Richard could not think of one.

The days became cold [Ambrose relates]. The rain and the hail beat against us, overturning our tents. We lost there, before and after Christmas, many of our horses, while the storms rotted our salt pork and melted the biscuits. The shirts of mail were covered with rust, and many of us fell ill from lack of food.

But their hearts were joyous because of the hope they had, of going to the Holy Sepulcher. Those who were sick at Jaffa and other places had themselves placed in litters and brought out to the camp. And in the camp gladness reigned—they lifted their helmets and tossed their heads, crying, "Our Lady, holy Virgin Mary, aid us! O Lord, allow us to worship and thank Thee, and to see Thy Sepulcher!"

Yet the high men and the captains decided that every one must go back to Ascalon, and rebuild its walls.[1]

When the news was known in the host, no one ever saw a host so troubled and so sad. Their joy—when they had thought to go to the Sepulcher—was not so great as this new grief. Some of them could not hold their peace, and cursed the long halt and the camp. All the host was discouraged. They did not know how to carry back the supplies they had brought thither, because the pack animals were enfeebled by the cold and storms. When they were loaded, they fell on their knees, and men cursed them, consigning them to the devil. Finally every one departed and that day we arrived at Ramlah.

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[1]The army was in no condition to undertake the siege of Jerusalem in the face of Saladin's forces, during the rains. No such siege had been contemplated by the leaders, although the French urged it. The camp had been pushed forward into the foothills to gratify the mass of the crusaders who were impatient to see Jerusalem, but this halfway measure only resulted in general discouragement.

At Ramlah was the host, and because of the discouragement, it separated. Many of the French went away, with the duke of Burgundy. The king with his nephew the count Henry of Champagne went on to Ibelin. The next day was worse than the one before. A little after midday they reached Ascalon, which they found broken down and destroyed—they had to climb over débris to enter it.

Saladin knew by his spies that our people had returned to the shore of the sea; then he said to his Saracens that they could go away to their country and rest until May. They went willingly, having remained four whole years in Syria.

Although Richard labored at rebuilding Jaffa, the first weeks of the new year 1192 saw the crusaders thoroughly disorganized. The French, their supplies and money exhausted, besought the English king for a loan; the duke of Burgundy went from Richard's side to talk with Conrad, who was secretly negotiating with Saladin—offering to make open war on Richard if the sultan would pledge him more of the coast cities. The Normans and English mocked the French, saying that they held wine goblets instead of swords in their hands, and that they filled the houses of the prostitutes in Acre so that their comrades had to break down the doors to get in.

The Genoese and Pisans who had given sturdy aid from the first now had time to covet the coast ports and to brood upon their ancient feud, and they started a war of their own in the streets of Acre, pulling the duke from his horse when he tried to intervene. Richard rode in haste up to the rioting, and managed to bring some order out of chaos.

He assembled all the captains in conference, and listened to their grievances. And he had to taste the dregs of his own failure to lead them. Because they explained that they were weary of delay and of the figurehead of Guy, who could never be a king in deed—they thought the only man who could make head against the Moslems was Conrad of Montserrat. They wanted Conrad to bring the factions together and to lead them as king of Jerusalem—so they pleaded, on their knees.

In silence Richard heard them. Like a bird of ill omen,

word had come over the sea from England. The prior of Hereford had brought him a letter from William, bishop of Ely, and he knew that his affairs in England went badly. His brother, the earl John, had driven out his chancellor and seized upon the exchequer.

He listened to the crusaders, and dismissed from his mind his own quarrel with Conrad, giving his assent to the election of Conrad and the retirement of Guy. To compensate the unhappy Lusignan, Richard made over to him the island of Cyprus.

Messengers were sent to Tyre to announce the decision of the council, while the crusaders rejoiced, making ready their scant robes of ceremony and furbishing their arms for the coming coronation. But their rejoicing was silenced within a few days, when a strange power from beyond the mountains intervened in their affairs.

Conrad, riding home from a banquet at the house of the bishop of Beauvais, was attacked by two young men without cloaks and stabbed. The Assassins who once had menaced Saladin struck down the marquis before his coronation. In the general consternation, many tales were repeated of his death, but the account of the Syrian scholar Abulfarag, written years later, is the clearest.

Two men of the Ismailites clad in the habit of monks rushed upon the marquis who was mounted on his horse. One of them struck him with a knife; the other fled into a church, near by. In truth, the wounded marquis was carried into this same church by his companions. When the monk who was the companion of the assassin beheld the marquis alive and speaking, he rushed out at him in the middle of the church and struck him again, and straightway he died.

These two Ismailites, seized and crucified and tortured by the Franks, said that the king of England had sent them. And because of the enmity which had been between them, the Franks believed the words of these cutthroats. However, it was manifest afterward that the *sidna*, chief of the Ismailites, sent them.[1]

[1]The Assassins were also called Ismailites. "Sidna" means simply "our lord" and was one of the general titles of the master of the Assassins. Histories have devoted many pages to the charge that Richard instigated the murder of Conrad.

The death of Conrad—the one man Saladin feared—healed the long feud that had divided the crusaders. At Tyre the French assembled to discuss the situation, and Henry of Champagne, riding into the city by chance, was seized upon by them as the man to take the crown awarded the dead marquis. Henry, young and amiable, had no enemies, and he was nephew to both Richard and Philip-Augustus. They urged him to marry the widowed Isabel at once.

Far in the south, Richard heard the news of Conrad's assassination while he was boar hunting, and for a space he was silent in astonishment.

"Sir Sergeants, this is my word—let Count Henry take the city of Acre and Tyre," he said at length, "and the whole of the land, if it please God, for ever. As to his marriage with the widow, I have no advice to give, for the marquis had her unlawfully. But tell the count in my name to take the field as speedily as possible and bring the French with him."

So, after Easter-tide, Henry married the youthful Isabel, and the crusaders assembled around his standard. Conrad had been removed from Saladin's path, but the Lion Heart remained.

And the English king, determined but irresolute as always when the responsibility of a campaign was laid upon him, bethought him of sending envoys to Saladin.

"Greet the sultan," he instructed his messengers, "and

He was accused of it when he was taken prisoner later in Austria. Even so distinguished a scholar as Von Hammer argues that Richard was guilty.

Baha ad Din and other Moslems after him say that Richard caused the murder. But Baha ad Din clearly is repeating the gossip of the camps at the time. The statement of the two fedawis, the murderers, under torture is no evidence, and the curious forged letter that appeared later—supposed to have been written by the master of the Assassins to absolve Richard—is meaningless.

On the other hand, such a murder would have been utterly out of keeping with Richard's character. There is no indication that he was ever near the country of the Assassins, or that he had any dealings with them. The charge laid against him is without evidence to support it.

Conrad is supposed to have come into conflict with the master of the Assassins, who was a distant neighbor. The marquis was scheming at the time to get possession of Beirut and Tripoli, two ports near the Assassins' strongholds, and his election to the kingship would have made him a formidable enemy of the order. There is no reason to doubt the truth of the summing-up by Abulfarag, quoted above.

say that the Moslems and the Franks are reduced to the last extremity, and the resources of the two sides in men and material are exhausted.

"As for Jerusalem, we are determined never to give it up, so long as a single man remains to us. You must return the land to us as far as the Jordan. As for the sacred cross, to you it is a bit of wood without value; but in our eyes it has a very great value. Will the sultan have the graciousness to send it back to us?"

After consulting with his amirs, Saladin answered:

"Jerusalem is as much to us as it is to you, and has more value in our eyes—for it was the place of the Prophet's night journey to heaven and will provide the place of assembly for our people at the Judgment Day. Do not think that we will give it up to you. The land was ours in the first place, and it is you who have come to attack it.

"If you were able to take it once, that was only by surprise and owing to the weakness of the Moslems who held it then. So long as the war will last, God will not permit you to raise stone upon stone there. As for the cross, its possession is a great advantage to us, and we can not give it up except for some gain to Islam."

And to his officers the old sultan spoke emphatically:

"If we make peace with these people down there, nothing will guarantee us against their bad faith. If I were to die, it would be difficult to get together such an army as this again. The best thing to do is to carry on the holy war until we have driven them out of the shore or until we are struck down by death."

XXIV

THE CARAVAN

SUMMER came again to the Holy Land—the fifth summer since the yellow banners of the sultan had been carried across the Jordan. Green were the foothills, where the sentinel poplars stood; clear the streams that wound between dark cedars and shining rims of marl and red sandstone down to the lush grass where the sheep grazed, and cloaked figures watched. The herds fattened upon the good grazing and there was a sound of bees in the warm air. Only the figures of the men, alert in their watching, unwieldy in their iron sheathing, were somber and intent upon the task of war that had been begun long since by forgotten grandsires, but had not yet been finished in this quiet land.

Upon them lay the burden of the war and they went on with it, turning aside from the fields that awaited the plough and the empty villages. It had become a part of them, as it had been a part of the vanished men of Antioch, and the ghosts of Hattin. It gathered them in the shadow of the high walls and sent them forth at night where no roads led.

Down in the plain the crusaders said, one man to the other, that a miracle had taken place in the Sepulcher that Eastertide. Saladin had come to the Sepulcher, to sit before the

darkened tomb where the dark lamps hung—and a hand invisible had lighted the lamps before the eyes of the Moslems. Surely the lighting of the lamps had been a sign and a portent.

Along the plain rode King Richard and his men. They stormed the fort of Darum, and slew every Moslem within the walls. They rode on, to the gardens of Gaza, among the sand dunes. But there were whispers of messengers that summoned him home across the sea. His followers talked of a wrong-doing in England, of a composition between the earl John and King Philip by which he would lose England. Some said that he would go away, and others said that he would remain in the Holy Land to the end of the war.

The crusaders talked among themselves and agreed that, if he went, they would still go on to Jerusalem. They rejoiced at that. Only the king was troubled by his thoughts. He meditated apart from his men, and flung himself alone upon his cot when his tent was pitched. At such a time one William of Poitou, a chaplain, beheld him. The chaplain walked back and forth before the tent entrance, not daring to speak to him, but weeping.

The king called him in and spoke. "By thy faith, what grief makes thee weep?"

"Sire," said the priest, "will you pledge me that you will not be angered if I speak?"

Richard pledged his word, and the chaplain mustered his courage.

"Sire, they blame you. Through the host runs the rumor of your return. May the day never come, in which you will leave us. O King, remember what God hath done for you—for no king of this time hath suffered less harm. Remember when you were count of Poitou, there was no neighbor so powerful your arm did not overthrow him. Remember the Brabaçons you discomforted so often, and that good adventure at Hautefort when the count of St. Gilles besieged it. Remember how your kingdom came to you without need of shield or helmet, and how you stormed the city of Messina, and that fine exploit at Cyprus when you put an emperor in chains—and the capture of Acre. How often hath God aided you? Think well, O King, and protect this land of God.

All of those who love you say that if you leave it without aid, it will be lost and betrayed."

Silence fell upon the tent, for those in attendance upon Richard dared not open their lips, and the king uttered no word. Chin on hand, the red-haired king meditated, and the chaplain stole away. The next day the Lion Heart summoned his herald and bade him go through the host, before the gates of Ascalon, and proclaim that for no earthly quarrel or any urging would King Richard leave the Holy Land until the coming Easter. And that all should make ready to march on Jerusalem.

And the host exulted, tumultuous as birds at the dawning of day.

"Now, we shall see the Sepulcher!" men said.

The great lords hastened to put their equipment in order, and the small folk made up packs holding a month's provisions. A long column set out upon the road, and through the dust helmets gleamed above the shields emblazoned with devices of lions or flying dragons. The marching men made haste, to Blanche Garde and the ruined Toron of the Knights, to the foothills and the hamlets of Beth Nable where they were joined by the French, at the mouth of the ravine through which winds the road to Jerusalem.

Perforce they halted there, for the Moslem cavalry beset their patrols and attacked the baggage trains coming up from the coast. While the earl of Leicester and the French engaged the enemy horsemen, the host set to work shaping timbers for siege engines. But Richard found something else to do.

Into the camp at Beth Nable rode three men in Turkish dress—three men born in Syria and speaking the language like Moslems. They were the king's spies and they had come from Egypt with news. The first great caravan of the summer was on its way from Cairo into the East. They had watched it winding, an endless stream of camels bound nose to tail, of mounted warriors and laden donkeys, whole families with slaves and goods, moving slowly across the dunes of the Jifar, circling far from Ascalon. Thousands of laden beasts, hundreds of armed men, forging along the desert road down to

the Dead Sea. By now they would be passing through the bare spurs of the hills south of Hebron.

Richard lost not an hour in setting out. Choosing a thousand riders and another thousand men-at-arms to sit the cruppers behind them, he mounted Fauvel that evening and headed south. A full moon climbed over the bulwark of the hills, and for a while they rode in the shadow of the heights with a haze of light of the plain beside them. Solitary watch towers gleamed white above them.

But they had been seen. Moslem couriers galloped to Saladin, and the sultan ordered an escort to hasten down to warn the men of the caravan and to lead it away from the trail out into the blind breast of the desert. His officers outstripped the crusaders, without sighting them—since they lay hidden in the ruined walls of a town during the next day—and reached the caravan. But, with no danger in view, the Moslems of the caravan were reluctant to leave the road and its wells. At the end of the afternoon they camped by the well of El Khuweilfa, where the beasts were watered—the escort of warriors going out to pitch their tents a little in advance of the multitude of the caravan that surrounded the well.

At Khuweilfa there was a cistern beside the well, but even with that, it took long hours to water several thousand animals, and the caravan lay passive, after its commander gave orders that no one was to start until the following morning.

All this was related to Richard by some friendly Bedawins who had come to the ruined town with their tidings, that evening. The English king thought they were lying, but he decided to go to see for himself. Taking some Turcoples for his only guard, and putting on an Arab head cloth, rings, and *khufieh*, he bade the Bedawins lead the way to the well.[1]

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[1]Ambrose does not say that Richard went with the Turcoples, but Baha ad Din, who heard the stories of the survivors of the caravan, is quite clear that he did.

"When this was reported by some Arabs to the king of England he did not believe it, but he mounted and set out with the Arabs and a small escort. When he came up to the caravan, he disguised himself as an Arab and went all around it. When he saw that quiet reigned in their camp and that every one was fast asleep, he returned and ordered his men into the saddle."

Ambrose and De Vinsouf give the incident of the challenge by Moslem sentries.

Cutting across the hills and riding swiftly—avoiding the watch towers on the trails—they drew near El Khuweilfa after dark but before the rising of the moon. They reined in their horses and went forward slowly, and almost at once they were challenged by Arabs on a hillock.

The Bedawins motioned Richard to be silent, and one of them answered the outpost.

"We went toward Ascalon to see if it was God's will that we should find plunder. Now, we go back to our place."

"Nay," cried the voice from the darkness, "ye have come out to look at us—and your place is with the king of England."

"*Y'allah!*" the Bedawins swore. "That is a lie."

They did not check their horses, moving on toward the black shape of the caravan. Several men mounted and rode after them, but lost them in the darkness wherein scores of figures moved around the animals. Richard and his companions walked their horses around the bivouac, until they made certain of the size and situation of the encampment. Then they hastened back to the crusaders.

The raiders fed their horses and ate a little themselves; in the clear moonlight they made their way out of the hills, approaching El Khuweilfa in the murk before dawn. This was an hour that warmed Richard's heart—he divided his men into companies, bade the French follow on his heels, and the foot soldiers follow the knights. His herald went among them, warning the dark groups not to pause for any plundering.

Headlong they charged into the first tents, which happened to be those of the armed escort, not the caravan. Egyptians and soldiers alike tumbled out of their sleeping robes and ran for their horses, to be cut down by the long swords of the knights. Some of them were able to saddle their beasts, and drew off toward a height where they held their ground.

Meanwhile it grew light and the crusaders sighted the main caravan, turning their attention to it at once. The plain became a chaos of swerving horses and running men, frightened camels staggering up roaring, and women screaming. Richard's Bedawins snatched loot by the armful and

the drivers joined forces with them. Through the confusion moved the armored forms of the great English lords, the earl of Leicester and the knights of Anjou—for the fighting went on stubbornly until the sun rose and the mounted Moslems withdrew. They managed to take away under the eyes of the crusaders two portions of the great caravan that had camped elsewhere.

But the raiders found wealth under their hands. Mule loads of spice and chests of gold and silver, with rolls of brocade—stands of weapons and any amount of pavilions and fine cloths. They counted more than four thousand camels, and as many horses, and investigation yielded rare things indeed—suits of silvered mail, and chessboards, medicines, and silver dishes. Most welcome of all was the great stock of provisions—barley, grain, and sugar.

They took five hundred prisoners, and made them lead away the laden animals.

When they returned to the army at Beth Nable they were greeted joyfully, but they heard ominous tidings. Spies reported that the Moslems had destroyed the wells and filled up the springs around Jerusalem.

All the exultation of the raid left Richard, hemmed in again by these multitudes of men praying to be led toward Jerusalem, while the grim Templars shook their heads. He fell moody again, watching through the hours of the nights when the sluggish face of the moon reared above the black ravine, and the cool night air stirred. Up yonder hidden eyes watched in the shadows and death lay in wait. Up yonder there was no water—by the walls of Jerusalem white in the moonlight. The very ledges of rock took shape in the night, rising like battlements before him, inanimate and forbidding.

XXV

BAHA AD DIN'S TALE

Every move of the crusaders was reported daily to Saladin by his spies and scouts. He knew that they were assembling at Beth Nable to besiege Jerusalem, and he felt suspense growing among his own men, wearied as they were by the ordeal of Acre and the rout at Arsuf. Without respite he directed the work of preparation for the decisive conflict. In the saddle before sun-up, he watched his masons raising the walls; he divided the circuit of the walls among his amirs, while gangs of laborers hauled up stones for the engines. At times he even dismounted to go among them and carry stones himself.

Every one knows [Baha ad Din relates] that in the land around Jerusalem it is useless to dig wells to find drinking water, the ground being nothing but a mountain of very hard rock. The sultan was careful to cut off all the waters found around the Holy City, to stop up the springs, to ruin the cisterns, and to break down the wells. There remained not a drop of water fit to drink outside the walls. He also sent the order into all the provinces to hasten troops toward him.

On the Wednesday after the loss of the caravan the old Kurd called his amirs into council to announce to them his plan for the defense of Jerusalem. They thronged into his pavilion and seated themselves about the carpet, whispering together. Many faces were missing from the circle. Al Adil, the shrewd and resourceful, had been sent to quell a revolt beyond the Euphrates, and Taki ad Din, who had been the sword-arm of the sultan, had been laid in his grave on the eastern frontier—when Saladin had held in his hand the letter announcing his death, he had sent away all the attendants from the tent, and had wept, fingering the broken seals of the missive. But El Meshtub, commander of the Kurds, was back again, ransomed. At his coming—who had cost Saladin dear by the harsh terms of his surrender—the sultan instead of reproaching him had risen from his seat to take him in his arms, saying that he had endured more than any of them at Acre.

Meshtub was seated again with the newcomers—Aboul Heidja the Fat, who could barely move once he was down on his heels, and the lean Turkomans from the east. Asad ad Din, the veteran, was there, and Baha ad Din, who from his master's side scanned the ring of faces intently.

Saladin, leaning toward the kadi, bade him speak for a little on the war. And while the learned man was talking, Saladin mustered his thoughts, knowing well that these chieftains were balancing between zeal for his cause and dread. For they feared that a siege of Jerusalem would be a second Acre, and they longed to keep to the open country.

What followed is told by Baha ad Din.

The sultan remained silent some time in the attitude of a man who reflects and we respected his silence. The amirs seemed to be in the best of moods, but their inner feelings were very different. They said to a man that the presence of the sultan in Jerusalem would be no advantage, and might be a peril for Islam—that they would hold Jerusalem themselves while he kept the outer country as at Acre, to surround the Franks. Then he spoke.

"The praise to God. To-day you are the only army of Islam. Only you are capable of confronting adversaries such as we have now before us. If you withdraw—may it not please God—the

enemy will roll up the country as you would roll up a leaf of parchment. On you alone depends the safety of the Moslems, everywhere. I have spoken."

El Meshtub then took the word.

"By God, I swear that while I live, I will not cease to aid thee!"

Others answered likewise, and this cheered the spirit of the sultan. He had the customary supper served and after that every one retired.

Thursday ended in great preparation and bustle. In the evening we attended again upon our prince, and watched with him a part of the night, but he was not at all communicative. We made the last prayer, which was also the signal for all of us to retire. I was going out with the others when he recalled me. So I sat down again at his side, and he asked me if I had heard the latest news. I answered, no.

"To-day I have had a communication," he said, "from Aboul Heidja. The amirs and mamluks held a gathering in his quarters, and blamed us for wishing to shut ourselves up in the city. They said that every one would undergo the fate of Acre, while all the outer country would fall to our enemies. They think it would be better to risk a ranged battle; then, if God gave us victory, we would be the masters; if defeated, we would lose Jerusalem, but the army would be saved."

The letter also contained this clause: "If you wish us to remain in the city, stay with us or else leave a member of your family—for the Kurds would never obey the Turks, and otherwise the Turks would no longer obey the Kurds."

Knowing by this that they did not intend to remain in the city, the sultan had a grieving at his heart. He had for Jerusalem an attachment that can hardly be conceived, and this message caused him pain. I spent that night with him. It was the eve of Friday in the dry season, and no person other than God made a third with us.

We decided to place in the city his great-nephew, son of Ferrukh Shah and lord of Baalbek. At first he thought of shutting himself up in the Holy City. We watched and prayed together.

At daybreak he was still awake, and I begged him to take an hour's rest. I went out to my quarters but had no sooner arrived than I heard the muezzin call to prayer, and for a while I made the necessary rinsings in water, since the day was beginning to break. As I sometimes made the morning prayer with the sultan, I went back to him and found him finishing his ablutions.

"I have not slept a single moment," he said to me.

"I know that."

"How could you know it?"

"Because I have not slept myself—there was not time."

After making the prayer together, I said to him: "An idea has come to me. May I submit it to you?"

He replied, "Speak!"

"O my lord, thou art overwhelmed with cares. To-day is Friday, in which all prayer is three-fold effective, and here we are, in a most suitable spot. Let the sultan make the ablutions, with bowings and prostrations, and confide the keys of his problem to the hand of the Lord."

For the sultan believed sincerely in all the tenets of the Faith, and submitted himself without misgiving to the divine wisdom. I left him then, but afterward, when the hour arrived, I made the prayer beside him in the mosque of Al Aksa, and I saw him make two bowings and prostrate himself, murmuring in a low voice. I saw the tears drip upon his grizzled beard and fall to the prayer rug.

In the evening of the same day I resumed my usual attendance upon him, and at that time a dispatch arrived from Djordic who commanded the advance guard [confronting the Franks]. We read these words:

"All the army of the enemy has just drawn up, mounted, on the crest of the hill and then retired to its camp. We have just sent spies to find out what is happening."

Saturday morning another dispatch came in, reading as follows:

"Our spy has just come back and tells us that a dispute divides the enemy, some wishing to push on to the Holy City and others intending to return to their own territory. The French insist on marching upon Jerusalem. 'We have left our own land,' they said, 'to regain the Holy City, and we will not return without taking it.'

"To that the king of England replied, 'From this point on, all the springs have been destroyed, so there is no water left near the city. Where, then, can we water our horses?'

"Some one pointed out that they could have water at Tekou'a, a stream which runs about a parasang from Jerusalem.

"'How,' said the king, 'could we water our beasts there?'

"'We will divide the army,' they replied, 'into two bodies, one of which will mount and ride off to the watering place while the other remains near the city to carry on the siege, and every one will go once a day to Tekou'a.'

"'When one part of the army goes to drink with its animals, the garrison of the city will sally out and attack the others who remain,' the king answered, 'and that will end it.'[1]

"They decided finally to choose among the best-known men three hundred persons who would in turn pass on their powers to a dozen individuals who would then choose three to decide the question. And they spent the night waiting for the decision of the three."

On the next morning we received another message. The Franks had broken camp and were on their way back to Ramlah.

Saladin had triumphed and Richard had failed, without giving battle. And the reason for this was that the Lion Heart, the mightiest man of them all in single combat, became helpless when he took command of the army.

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[1]Ambrose gives this account of Richard's decision to turn back:

"The French urged him many times to lay siege to the Holy City. The king said, 'We are far from the sea, and the Saracens would come down to cut off our supplies. Then the circuit of the city is so great that so many men would be needed . . . that we could not keep the host from being attacked by the Turks. And if I should lead the host, and if I should besiege Jerusalem under these conditions, and if misfortune befell the host, I should be for ever blamed and dishonored. It is not to be done."

Richard then left the decision to the men selected by the council, who seem to have been Templars and Hospitalers for the most part. Another chronicler, De Vinsouf, says that if they decided to go on, Richard offered to go with them not as leader but as a soldier in the ranks.

As to the final verdict, Ambrose says:

"Those who had sworn and determined not to go on explained their reason—that no water could be found for beasts or men, without great labor and danger. It would be the season of great heat, and no water could be found without going two leagues into a district filled with enemies."

XXVI

SALADIN STRIKES

The pliant steel of Saladin's patience had broken the iron courage of the crusaders. As iron snaps asunder, the army broke up into fragments once it had turned its back upon the hills of Jerusalem. Angered past reconciliation, the French went off to the north; the pilgrims and masterless men trailed down to Jaffa, while the Italian soldiery hastened to their citadels of trade along the coast, and only the Templars and Hospitalers remained to guard the new wall of Ascalon.

Richard went at once to Acre, as a man hurries from a long ordeal. His thoughts he kept to himself. Beyond doubt, he was impatient to embark for England where he was sorely needed, and had only lingered this long because the crusaders had insisted on marching to Jerusalem. So long as they turned their faces toward the Holy City, the pride of the Lion Heart would not let him forsake them.

Now, with failure accepted, his hands were free. As a boy casts aside a once-cherished toy for a new plaything, he started toward the sea. Not before he had done two mad

things. In solemn conference he approved a plan to march against Cairo, after his departure, promising the aid of some three thousand English and Normans—although even the minstrel Ambrose saw the hopelessness of such a move. And, impatiently, he sent envoys to find Al Adil and bid the sultan's brother make terms for the crusaders.

Still, he clung to the hope of fair terms, saying that he would not relinquish half-ruined Ascalon. And on his way to embark—after joining the queens at Acre—he ordered his own followers to make ready to take ship for Beirut to win this fertile northern port for the crusaders. He paid no heed to the gibes of the French, or to the song they sang in the taverns. For they made up a song about a coward and a king that stung the pride of the red-haired warrior.

So matters were, when Saladin seized his opportunity. He roused his amirs, shook from them the inertia of the year's defensive caution, and launched his horsemen straight down from Jerusalem to Jaffa.

They came like a sword thrust out of the night, twenty thousand mounted men with siege engines on camel and mule back, and an exulting mass of Arabs clinging to their flanks. They drove the surprised crusaders from the fields and suburbs and started to pound with rocks and iron javelins at the gate of the wall toward Jerusalem.

Some five thousand Christian men-at-arms were penned within the wall and in the tumult they manned their defenses sturdily, while a ship sped to Richard at Acre with tidings of the attack. The first rush of the Moslems was beaten back, and the sharp check cooled the spirits of the Turkomans who had no sympathy with sieges. It needed all Saladin's urging to drive them to the assault, and for three days the Sultan's mangonels gnawed at the gate until it was broken down and a breach of two lance lengths opened in the wall beside it.

Then the Moslems scented victory, and flung themselves at the gap under a storm of arrows, their long scimitars swinging and crashing into the close ranks of the crusaders. Climbing over bodies and broken stones, the exultant mamluks forced the breach and drove the Christians through the

streets, up the slope to the little citadel on a rocky height above the sand of the shore.

After them swarmed the Turkoman clans and the Arabs nearly maddened by the rich plunder around them in dwellings and shops. Beating in the door of a monastery, the Moslems fell to hacking the bodies of the monks, killing them slowly to enjoy their torture. A church was ransacked and burned, and smoke poured up from the alleys where the looters snatched and screamed.

They were beyond all control of their officers. Finding wine casks in the houses, they beat in the heads of the casks and let the wine run underfoot; they forced captive women and children to drive the herds of swine together in one place and then left the bodies of the Christians strewn among the carcases of the abominated swine.

Some of the fugitives climbed into boats drawn up on the gray sand of the shore, while others struggled to launch the boats. Alberic of Rheims, the commander of Jaffa, tried to escape in one of these vessels, but his knights pulled him back and led him up to a tower of the citadel. Few survived here—some two thousand it seems—and their situation was the more hazardous because the wall of the citadel had not been entirely rebuilt before the Moslem attack. Alberic of Rheims saw no hope for them. "We can do nothing here except give up our lives," he said. The patriarch, a gigantic man who had escaped the contagion of fear, had sterner stuff in him. He rallied the people, reminding them that a ship had been sent to Acre for aid three days ago. If the assistance did not come, they could beg Saladin for terms.

Saladin tried to restore order among his looters, and to launch a fresh attack on the gray stone wall of the citadel.

> The soldiers would not obey him [Baha ad Din explains] although he did not cease urging them until a late hour of the night. Then, perceiving that they were harassed by heat and fighting and smoke to the point of stupor, he mounted his horse and returned to his tent which was pitched near the baggage trains. There the officers who were on duty rejoined him, and I went to get some sleep in my tent. But it was impossible to sleep—I was so troubled by misgiving.

At daybreak we heard trumpets sound among the Franks, and we thought that aid had come for them. The sultan sent for me, and said:

"Reinforcements must have come for them by sea. But enough Moslem troops are on the shore to keep any one from debarking. Here is what must be done. Go and find the Malik el Dahir,[1] and tell him to place himself outside the southern gate. You will enter the citadel with some men of your choice, and induce the Franks to pass out. You will take possession of all valuables and arms you find there."

I went off at once, taking Shams ad Din with me, and I found the Malik el Dahir on the hill near the sea with the advanced guard. He slept, in his coat of loose mail and mail hood, ready for combat. When I woke him, he got up at once half asleep and mounted his horse, while I accompanied him to the place where he was to await the sultan's orders. There he made me explain what I planned to do.

With my men I then entered the town of Jaffa, and on reaching the citadel we called to the Franks to come out. They replied that they would do so and began making preparations.

Just as they started out Aziz ad Din remarked that they must not be allowed out until we had removed the Moslem soldiers from the town, or they would be pillaged. Djordic then tried to drive back our men by great blows of his baton; but as they were no longer under the control of their officers or in ranks he found it impossible to make them go out. He kept on struggling with the mob against my remonstrance until it was full daylight.

Seeing how the time had passed, I said to him, "Reinforcements are drawing nearer to the Franks, and the only thing for us to do is to hasten the evacuation of the citadel. That is what the sultan insisted upon."

Then he consented to do what I asked. We went to the gate of the citadel nearest the spot where the Malik el Dahir waited. Here we managed to pass out forty-nine Franks with their horses and women, and sent them away.[2] But then those who remained in the citadel took it into their heads to resist us.

By now the relieving fleet had drawn near and every one could

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[1]One of Saladin's sons. On hearing that ships were approaching, the sultan granted terms to the garrison in the citadel.

[2]As Baha ad Din had feared, the first crusaders to go out were seized and plundered and put to death. Saladin had agreed to grant them their lives and as much property as they could carry off, on the payment of the usual small ransom for each individual.

count the ships, and the garrison prepared to resume fighting—we saw them putting on mail and seizing their shields.

Seeing matters take this turn, I descended from my knoll near the gate and went to warn Aziz ad Din who was posted below with some troops. A moment later I was out of the town and with the malik, who sent me to the sultan to inform him of what was happening. He ordered a trumpeter to blow the call to arms. The drums rolled the recall, and our soldiers hastened in from all parts of the country to join in the conflict. They closed in on the town and the citadel. The Franks of the garrison finding that no aid was coming from the ships believed death inevitable.

King Richard was in command of the galleys that drifted beyond the swell of the Jaffa beach. The galley bearing word of the Moslem attack had reached the harbor of Acre in the evening, while he was in his tent making the last preparations for embarking with his followers for Beirut and then for Europe. The messengers had come before him without ceremony, crying that Jaffa was taken and a remnant of the Christians besieged in the citadel, and that all would be lost unless aid reached them at once.

"As God lives," Richard had answered, "I will go there!"

And go he did, in spite of obstacles—for some of the army was already at Beirut, and the French refused point-blank to march again under his standard. The Templars and Hospitalers agreed to go to Jaffa by land, only to be held up on the way by a Moslem ambush. Richard boarded his galleys with the earl of Leicester, and those stalwarts, his constant companions, Andrew of Chavigny and the Priux knights. With some hundreds of men-at-arms and volunteers from among the Genoese and Pisan bowmen, he put to sea, only to be held back for two days by contrary winds off the Carmel headland. They reached the Jaffa beach in the night and waited to see what story the dawn would tell.

When the mists cleared and the sun blazed above the distant hills they saw nothing to cheer them. The beach was filled with Arabs and Turks, who were obviously settled there. Above the line of the sand, smoke eddied from the low gray wall of the city, half a mile from them. In the palm

groves near the wall stood Moslem pavilions. Only Moslem banners could be made out. No sign of any kind was visible on the fortress, on its low bluff over the sand.

The galleys moved in closer. Richard, standing with his knights under the red awning of the stern, scanned the line of the shore, and turned to his companions.

"Sir knights," he said briefly, "what shall we do—go away, or land?"

To try to force their way ashore in the face of Saladin's army seemed to them out of the question, and they said so. They believed that all the people of the castle had been killed.

At this moment the survivors of the citadel were actually calling to them, but the sound of the voices was drowned by the pulse of the swell and the taunting cries of the Arabs—"*Allah akbar—Allah l'allahu.*" So Baha ad Din says.

Then a black figure dropped from the wall of the citadel to the sand of the beach below. It fell but got up again and ran through the Moslems to the edge of the swell. Plunging into the water, it swam toward the nearest galley, which moved in and picked it up. The swimmer proved to be a priest of the garrison and he was taken at once to the long red galley over which the king's banner floated.

Panting and dripping, the messenger flung himself on his knees before the king. "Beau Sire, the people who await you here are lost if you do not aid them."

"What!" Richard demanded. "Are any living yonder? Where are they?"

"Some of them live, shut in the towers."

Richard looked at his companions. "Messires—damned be he who hangs back!"

He ordered his vessel to row in, while the half-naked seamen on the benches looked each at the other askance. The long oars rose and dipped, the red galley with the dragon-head prow slipped into the line of the swell and the others followed after. On the sideboards the English men-at-arms buckled tight their belts, thrusting their arms through the slips of the shields, and freed the swords in their sheaths.

The red galley was the first to grate upon the sand. It lurched and rolled in the swell, while the Moslems yelled their hatred and the swarthy Italian shipmen crossed themselves and snatched up bows and axes. Richard gave no more orders, and tarried not to bring any reason into the madness of this landfall. He jumped over the side, waist deep in the water. He still wore his ship slippers with no other armor than a mail shirt and a steel cap. On his shoulder he gripped a crossbow and his long sword hung at his side.

Wading through the swell, he began to shoot bolts at the Moslems, with Peter of Priux and another knight beside him. When they came out of the water they drew their swords, lashing about them under the arrows that the shipmen plied from the prow. Recognizing the king, the Moslems in front of him gave back hastily, while the English hastened forward to form a shield ring about him. Other galleys were running up on the beach, the crews casting beams and benches ashore. Men caught these up and carried them forward, lugging the small skiffs and riff-raff of the beach into a barricade of sorts.

But Richard was not within the barricade. Taking a shield from a man, he ran across the beach to a postern gate in the wall and a stair that he remembered led to the Templars' house.

With his knights clattering after him he leaped up the stair and the Arab looters of the alleys yelled in amazement at sight of the dripping figure that strode among them. Richard cleared the alleys and pounded at a gate of the citadel until the garrison became aware of him.

By then his galleys held the beach, and his men were streaming up the Templars' stair. His banner went up, on the tower of the citadel. The knights of the garrison took new heart at his coming; they sallied forth and began to drive the disorganized Moslems toward the gates of the outer town.

Then [Baha ad Din relates] charging in a mass on our men, they drove them out of the town. The gate was so clogged by the fleeing that many lost their lives. A throng of pillagers who followed the army had lingered in some churches, occupied with deeds that

should not be mentioned. The Franks forced their way in and killed them and made them prisoners.

This all happened under my eyes in less than an hour. As I was mounted, I set off at a gallop to advise the sultan whom I found with the two envoys[1] before him, and holding in his hand the pen with which he was about to write the letter of grace.

I whispered to him what had happened, and, without commencing to write, he began to talk to them to distract their attention.

Some seconds later Moslems came up, fleeing before the enemy. Seeing them, he cried out to his men to seize the envoys, and to mount their horses.

Richard's quick action had wrought something like a miracle. On his heels the men from the galleys had been able to break into the waterfront of Jaffa before the disciplined portions of Saladin's troops could come up to oppose them; the rout of the Moslems in the streets had thoroughly disorganized the army outside, forcing Saladin to draw back in haste to the nearest hills to take stock of the situation.

Richard and his crossbowmen pursued as best they could with the three horses they managed to pick up in the town. The bolts of the crossbows followed the Moslems for two miles, and that night Richard pitched his tent where Saladin's pavilion had been.

Word of the arrival of Malik Ric spread over the countryside, and when quiet had fallen around Jaffa in the evening, some of the old mamluks and chieftains like Dolderim went back to the Christian lines out of curiosity to see this king who had dared land in the face of an army. They came in peace, and were taken to the royal tent, where Richard cried them a welcome.

They found him still in his mail shirt, seated on his pallet amid a mass of arms and gear. Around the great tallow candles stood the tall figures of his knights. Wine goblets had been emptied and filled again many times, while the ruddy warrior king laughed at the happenings of the day.

Nothing could have pleased him more than the appearance

[1]The patriarch and the commander of the garrison who had come through the fighting to beg for terms before the landing of the galleys.

of the dark Moslem lords in armor and ceremonious *khalats*. He greeted them, called them by name.

"Why did the sultan leave at my coming?" he demanded. "By God, I did not come armed for serious fighting. Look, I still have on no shoes but ship sandals."

Again he exclaimed, "By the great God, I did not think he could take Jaffa in two months, and here he carried it in two days!"

After thinking a moment, he gave them a message for Saladin.

"Tell him I have no wish to be a Pharaoh over this land. Will he sacrifice all the Moslems to keep me out? I renounce the claims I made to Al Adil. Let the sultan grant me but one church, and I will return him the like."

To this upon the next day Saladin made grave response.

"The king has made himself master of all these cities, yet he knows well that if he goes away they will fall into our power. If it seems a simple matter for him to stay the winter here, far from his own country, is it not more easy for me?

"I have around me my family and my children. Moreover, I am now an old man, no longer having a taste for the pleasures of the world. I have renounced all such. As for my troops, the men I have round me in the winter are replaced by others in the summer. In the end, I believe that my actions will be accounted as true devotion. And I shall not cease to hold to this line of conduct until God grants the victory to him to whom He is pleased to grant it."

Behind these words might be perceived a hope that Richard would leave the coast, and a dread that he would stay. Saladin's will to hold out was steadfast as ever, but he was laboring with the disorganization among his men. Under no other circumstances, perhaps, would he have agreed to the plan to seize Richard that his men were now forming.

In the interval arrived Henry of Champagne with a single galley and a few knights. He brought word that the rest were checked by the Moslems holding the shore.

Richard had now at Jaffa some fifty-five knights with several hundred men-at-arms and two thousand-odd bowmen, Genoese and Pisans among them. But he had no more

than fifteen horses. With this semblance of an army he lay outside Jaffa facing the Moslems.

He had landed on Saturday. It was Tuesday night that a detachment of Turks from Aleppo and one of the Kurdish clans started forth to penetrate his camp and carry him off.

XXVII

RICHARD'S FAREWELL

DARKNESS covered the earth, blurring the outlines of the squat fig trees and the shaggy palms against the sky where the stars were fading. Dogs barked from time to time in the distance. Along the beach behind the camp the swell sighed gently. Beside the tents a church tower loomed.

Among the tents men sprawled on cloaks, breathing heavily. There were no camp fires, and the young moon had slipped out of sight long since. Sentries who had paced the hard ground idly in the earlier hours of the night now leaned on their spears or sat beneath the screen of the trees where the water bags dripped, and tried not to snore. A young Genoese got up from the ground, yawned and spat. Stepping over the huddled bodies around him, he walked between the tents, lifting his feet drowsily over the cords that had been tightened by the dampness of the night.

He walked out into a trampled field in which tufted artichokes had been growing not long since. He squatted down, blinking indifferently at the sky, now turning gray. Somewhere horses moved with a shuffling sound, and he heard the mutter of men's voices. But there were no horses afoot in the

camp. Down in the murk toward the hills dull gleams appeared and vanished, and he watched them. Then he heard a faint clinking of metal, and a cold chill passed over his skin.

The dim flashing yonder under the lightening sky came from polished helmets, and men and horses were moving toward the camp. The Genoese ran back toward the tents, shouting: "Arms! Arms!"

Sentries called out questions, and the nearest sleepers roused. The Genoese ran on, stumbling over the ropes, and tall figures came from the tents to question him. An order was given and a horn blared. Knights ran up, pulling mail coifs over their heads and knotting sword girdles about their hips. Some of them had not stopped to don breeches or hose, and their legs shone white in the murk.

King Richard appeared among them in full mail, his Danish ax swinging in his hand. A horse was led up and he mounted hastily. The quiet earl of Leicester and his companions followed his example without ado—there were only ten horses, and in the darkness a man took what he found. Even these makeshift chargers, sorry nags some of them—which did not know a lance from a cart pole—were better than no horses.

The sky lightened in the east, with the first yellow of sunrise. Men said that Moslems were advancing in squadrons, slowly. Either they had heard the Christians rouse out, or they did not like to charge until they could see something. Beyond the church, on the other side of the town, the horns of the Genoese and Pisans sounded.

Richard had Normans and English with him. Under his sharp commands they ranged themselves in a half circle spreading from the church to the shore. The men of the outer rank went down on their right knees, holding their shields slanting from the ground in their left hands. Their right hands held their lances, the butts wedged into the ground, the iron heads pointing outward. Between every pair of lances a crossbowman took his place, with another standing behind him to load an extra piece and pass it forward to him.

Along their rank rode King Richard, outlined against the red dawn, and they heard his deep voice.

"Stand fast, valiant men. . . . Do not give ground, for the enemy are round us, and to flee is to die."

His voice went away, and the Moslems charged with a sudden burst of sound and a trampling of hoofs on the hard ground. They came direct for the red banner of the lion, and the crossbows whirred in their faces. The horses crashed into the spears, and the clatter of swords was heard.

The charge did not break the sturdy spearmen, and the Moslems wheeled off. Other waves charged, but under the sting of the iron bolts, they turned and galloped along the front, plying their bows. Richard had not the patience to endure this for long. He led out his ten horsemen against the clans, with spears down. The heavier knights beat a way through the Kurds, and Richard found himself beyond them.

Looking around, he saw the earl of Leicester on foot, fighting with his sword. Richard galloped over to him, and covered him until he could mount a riderless horse. The mêlée grew thick about them, and some Turks overthrew and disarmed the knight of Mauleon. They were carrying him off a prisoner, when the king saw them and charged them, lashing about him with his great ax until De Mauleon was free and among his own men.

The Moslems drew off, and the sun flooded the plain with light. For a while there was a pause while the two sides ranged themselves anew. And in this quiet, an unarmed Turk rode up, holding high his right arm and gripping in his left the reins of two fine horses ready saddled. He was allowed into the lines and led to the knights, to whom he explained that the horses were a gift from Al Adil to the English king. The sultan's brother had seen that Richard was poorly mounted.

"Sire," his knights cried, "do not ride either of them. There is evil in this and they will bear you off to the Moslems."

For answer Richard swung himself into the saddle of one of the chargers.

"If Satan sent me a good horse this day," he said, "I would ride him."

And he ordered a purse to be given to the messenger.

By mid-morning the battle was going badly for the Christians. Saladin's mounted bowmen drove at them, first at one place, then at another. The men-at-arms stood their ground, but the galley men drifted back to the ships, away from the missiles. Some of the Genoese ran into the town, and behind them the Moslem horse penetrated the gaps in the city wall.

When Richard heard of this he rode back, into Jaffa, taking with him two knights and a couple of archers. He dared not withdraw more men from the thin line of the Normans and English. Trotting through the narrow streets among the fugitives, he came full upon three Turks who had bright caparisoning on their horses. He dug his spurs into the Arab charger, and struck down one of the Moslems with his sword, knocking a second man from the saddle. The third fled and the archers caught the two horses.

Seeing the king, some seamen trailed after him, and Richard fairly cleared the streets with a growing queue of retainers behind him. This done, he seized the moment of quiet to circle down to the beach, sending his new followers into the galleys to rout out the malingerers. When the ships were cleared he upbraided the throng, telling off five men to guard each vessel. With the rest he went back into the city, mustering wounded and unarmed men to pile stones within the breaches of the crumbling wall. Then he led the fugitives out to the fighting line.

Here he dared not rest. The Moslems were still attacking. With his dozen horsemen, Richard sallied out and broke up a charge. Still, he pressed on, his great sword swinging over his head. He left his companions and went forward, disappearing among the Moslems.

Some Turks closed around him and he beat them off. A single officer charged him at a gallop, bending low in the saddle, his round shield raised and his scimitar swinging. As he came, he mocked those who hung back before the king.

"Make way," he shouted, "O dogs—make way for a man."

Richard saw him and wheeled his charger, rising in his stirrups to strike once with his sword. The long blade split the light shield, and bit through the man's throat, turning against the bones of his chest. With the head, the Moslem's

shoulder and arm flew off and his body dropped lifeless to the ground.

Shouting their dismay, the others drew back before the iron rider who could not be overthrown. They shot arrows at him, and launched javelins as he passed among them, but one man among so many is no easy mark.

From the whirling horses and the dust clouds Richard emerged again into the view of his men, with javelins sticking in his mail and the leather caparisoning of his horse pierced with arrows.

No longer did the Moslems attack with spirit. Richard seemed to them invulnerable, and to go against his sword was surely death. They could not break the line of the Christians again, and when Saladin gave the order for another onset, his riders sat their horses motionless and sullen. Snatching up his rein, the sultan rode among them, but their eyes were elsewhere.

From the line of spearmen Richard had appeared anew. Into the cleared ground between Christian and Moslem he trotted, lance uplifted, and from left to right he rode slowly down the Moslem front, and no man dared go out against him.

When Saladin cried to them again to charge, only the malik his son responded. When the old sultan motioned him back, some of the amirs laughed, and the brother of Meshtub shouted, "Make your young officers charge! Call them forth, who struck us the day of the taking of Jaffa, and stole the loot from our men!"

Saladin looked about him and gave the order to retire, riding off with his mamluks to his own tent.

Richard had saved Jaffa. But in the next days, overwearied, he fell ill with many of his people. In the heat and stench of the town that was little better than a shambles, men died swiftly, and the king did not get back his strength. They carried him up to Acre, where he ordered Count Henry and the masters of the Temple and Hospital to his couch.

They came with grave faces. At Jerusalem, Saladin had found new reinforcements, trained mamluks from Egypt. The malcontents had been sent away, the army whipped

into shape for a new blow against the weakening crusaders. The French had moved south, but were camped at Caesarea, determined not to fight under Richard's banner. The whole line of the coast was open to attack, with no more than a hundred knights to be relied upon to obey Richard. The king, wasted by the fever, knew that he could not take the saddle again for weeks.

"Bid Al Adil from me," he said, "to make what terms he can for us. Anything, but the surrender of Ascalon."

He had struck his last blow in the Holy Land. Humphrey of Toron and the veteran lords of the land went to Saladin's camp, and there agreed upon the terms of peace with Al Adil—for Saladin, still desiring final victory, knew that his troops were weary of the war and that no gain could come by fighting on.

"I fear to make peace," he said to Baha ad Din, "for I know not what will happen if I die."

The terms were simple—each side keeping, in effect, what it held at the time. The Christians became acknowledged masters of the coast, from Tyre to Jaffa, including of course Acre. This meant that they kept also the neighboring villages in the plain midway to the foothills. Ramlah on the pilgrim road from Jaffa to Jerusalem was to be held mutually, and no taxes were to be placed on merchandise going and coming across the new frontier—in this clause, and in the long dispute over Ascalon, the hand of the Italian merchants is to be seen. Christian pilgrims were to be free to journey up to Jerusalem without paying tribute, under the protection of the sultan.

Richard had to yield Ascalon—at least the fortifications of the city were to be torn down and the place left open, without being held by either side for three years.

And a truce was agreed upon for three years from the coming Easter, which meant more nearly four years.

Al Adil rode down with the chieftains of the crusaders, to hear the Christians take the oath at Acre. It was Wednesday, the second of September, in this year 1192, that Count Henry, Humphrey of Toron, Balian of Ibelin, and the masters of the military orders gathered in the small stone-flagged

room beside the sick chamber of the king. Under Al Adil's eyes a written parchment lay upon the table where candles stood to give a better light than the dim embrasure. In their court surcoats the Christian lords who were now to be masters of this strip of coast came forward and signed the parchment or made their mark, and swore upon their faith to keep the new peace.

Then the parchment was carried in to Richard, and a priest began to read over the written words. The sick king, who knew of the conditions, lifted his hand impatiently, bidding the reader cease.

"I give my word and my faith," he said, and turned his head away from them. He had sworn to them that when the truce ended he would return to the Holy Land with new forces, to renew the war.

The next day Saladin swore to the peace before his amirs, asking only that Bohemund, prince of Antioch, and the count of Tripoli agree also to the terms—which they hastened to do thereafter.

On that day Moslem officers rode into the streets and market places of Jerusalem and announced that peace was made —that Jerusalem was safe in the hands of Islam and that Moslems could go where they willed among the Christians. Drums beat by the gates and throngs sat in joyful talk. Venturesome souls wandered down into the Christian camps; warriors from the East left their outposts and rode among the weary men-at-arms who had left Europe long months before.

The men-at-arms were drinking wine, well content to hear that the war had ceased. New faces appeared on the highways, and already the Christian priests and barons were making ready to journey up to Jerusalem to visit the Sepulcher.

Richard would not go. He would not go as a pilgrim to the Sepulcher that he had sworn to redeem with his sword.

What were his thoughts as he lay on his pallet, harkening to the stir and bustle of his nobles making ready for the ride to Jerusalem? Did he remember that his unbridled spirit had

estranged the other leaders of the crusade, until, one after the other, they left him? He should have healed the quarrels, not embittered them. And Jerusalem—could he have taken the Holy City if he had pressed on that last summer?

Under his leadership the crusade had failed. No man could wield sword or lance so well as he, and surely he had not spared himself hurt or hazard in this venture. But when he took command of the armed host he became helpless—even the success at Arsuf had not been his doing. He had tried to treat with Saladin when he should have advanced with the army; and when, at long last, he stood at Beth Nable within a ride of the Holy City, he might have treated to advantage, instead of withdrawing.

He had failed. And yet long would the Moslems remember Malik Ric, and never would minstrel or soldier forget how Richard had waded ashore at Jaffa in the face of an army—or how thereafter almost single-handed he had held thousands at bay, from the rising to the setting of the sun. Almost he had won there with his sword the victory that he had forfeited by his feckless leadership. Almost . . .

Heedless and arrogant, lovable and utterly brave, the Lion Heart lay on his pallet in Acre town, and thought of this not at all. He played with his hawks, or listened to a new *lai* of the minstrel Blondel—impatient of Berengaria's ministrations, eager only for the hour when he could put to sea and set his face toward a new venture.

Such is the Richard revealed to us by the chronicles of his crusade. Not the legendary Richard, ever victorious, and not the Richard drawn by Scott, high-strung, dominant, yet always hampered by the jealousy and treachery of the princes his allies.

And still the portrait is not complete, and the riddle of his actions remains to be explained. When Richard landed upon the coast of Acre, it is clear that he was assured and confident —even to carelessness. He had so borne himself at Messina and Cyprus; at Acre he chafed under delay, and he thrust aside the other commanders deliberately, estranging them or overruling them until he himself held sole command. He

sent jesting messages to Saladin, and ordered the massacre of the Moslem captives who were actually hostages.

Between that massacre, on August twentieth, and his first conference with Al Adil, on September fifth, his whole bearing changed. The careless and confident warrior became the cautious and moody king.

Consider his actions during those two weeks. He is in unquestioned command at last, yet his march toward Jaffa becomes slower and slower, owing to the *testudo*-like formation in which he has placed his men; at Arsuf he forbids irritably the Hospitalers to make a counter-charge—yet when that charge begins involuntarily, he throws aside all restraint and gets to the head of it himself. But the next day he declines to resume the battle. Although he had hoped to march on at once to Ascalon, he delays at Jaffa, and delays again. He fortifies Jaffa and indulges in magnificent but useless knight-errantry while the months pass and he importunes the sultan almost petulantly for terms. When the army itself twice begins the march to Jerusalem, he is the first to insist upon a retreat. He fortifies Ascalon, and garrisons every little hill tower he can reach.

No general was ever more eager to intrench himself and more reluctant to attack. His only hope of defeating Saladin and gaining Jerusalem lay in taking the offensive. And this he did not attempt. When the French nobles reminded him that the sole purpose of the crusade was an advance upon Jerusalem, Richard answered by pointing out the difficulties in the way. He even insisted on them, in the last, bitter argument. Why? What had changed the debonair Coeur de Lion into the timid general?

Not the disheartening tidings from England. Richard had already twice hazarded the fortunes of his new kingdom, to aid in the crusade—once when he exhausted the resources of England to outfit his expedition, and again when he remained in Palestine after Philip sailed back to France—and the urgent appeal to return to England did not reach him until April, 1192.

Modern historians, both French and English, have observed that Richard was unfit to hold high command. In-

capacity alone, however, does not explain his actions. A foolish or ignorant commander may sacrifice his men, or throw away his army, but he does not intrench and safeguard his men and communications. Richard sacrificed the chance of victory for minor successes until the last.

There is an explanation of the riddle of Richard's conduct. In justice to the memory of a gallant man, it should be brought forward.

Until he landed at Acre, the English king had been accustomed only to the feudal warfare of France, with its raid and siege carried on by the ill-disciplined and scanty feudal levies of the princes. The moment he set out from Acre to march to Jaffa at the head of a great army, Richard was confronted by the problems of the *grande guerre*—the war of armies maneuvering over open and strange country, with the fate of the crusade hanging upon each battle. It seems to the present writer that the English king *realized* then his unfitness to command in such a war. He could not relinquish the command. He had sought it deliberately at Acre; his reputation and his exalted rank prevented him from yielding it to an inferior; and there remained no man of princely rank to whom he could have surrendered it—even Conrad, the ablest commander of the allies, having withdrawn in anger to Tyre. He was helpless to accomplish anything, but he could not resign his leadership. Nor could he alter the intent of the mass of the crusaders, who had their hearts set on Jerusalem, blindly, at all hazards.

So Richard became afraid, not of personal peril, but of disgrace and disaster. Unable to turn back, he must go on, knowing that his unfitness to command made every movement hazardous. The antipathy of Conrad, the growing insubordination of the French who realized his failing, and the bad news from England, all made his position more intolerable. And the blind devotion of the common soldiers who looked upon him as a matchless leader only added to his mental torment.

The proof of this may lie in his own words, in answer to the French when the army was nearest Jerusalem, as given by the chronicler De Vinsouf: "You will not see me as leader,

when it would be folly to press on, and disgrace to me. If it please you to proceed to Jerusalem, I will accompany you as comrade, but not as commander. I will follow, but I will not lead you."

We will never know Richard's thoughts in this crisis. His brief letters home only mentioned events such as Arsuf, and he confided, apparently, in no one. Perhaps he never understood that he had ruined the chances of the crusade by his refusal to content himself with the leadership of the English contingent, and to coöperate with Philip and Conrad. But it is significant that, at the end, he would not visit Saladin and set foot within Jerusalem—the two things that he had most longed for—after his failure.

What he decided to do, in his dilemma, is pitifully clear. He determined to avoid battle with Saladin and to safeguard the army at all costs, while he risked his own life in reckless efforts to gain some advantage with a handful of men. Always on such forays, he was in high spirits, while in the camp he became moody and uncertain. He shunned his headquarters deliberately, and kept himself as much as possible beyond the protection of his own lines. It may have been that, realizing his failure, he sought death under arms.

Only once did the need of the army fit in with his own knight-errantry. That was when Saladin came down on Jaffa. Richard's response was instant, and his almost childish enthusiasm afterward was unmistakable.

The riddle of Richard puzzled Al Adil and Baha ad Din at times, but Saladin understood the warrior-king. It was with a two-fold meaning that the sultan said, "If I should be fated to lose the Holy Land, I would rather lose it to Malik Ric than to any other." He admired Richard's courage, while he perceived his inability to command.

But Saladin was not to relinquish the Holy Land. All the armed power of Christendom, with a sacrifice of nearly two hundred thousand men, had won back only a fragment of his conquests and not one of the holy places. Although he did not realize it, the truce that Saladin had dreaded was to be a safeguard for Islam, since his own days were numbered.

XXVIII

AMBROSE VISITS THE SEPULCHER

ALMOST before the treaty had been signed the first of the pilgrims were on their way into the hills, under the leadership of the hero Andrew of Chavigny. They put aside their weapons and armor, and went in a body hundreds strong—an extraordinary risk, for the Moslems who had fought against them a few days before were still camped in the hills, and they had not yet received a safe-conduct from Saladin.

Ambrose relates what befell them:

As they passed the plain of Ramlah in their journey, the barons talked together and decided that they would send to tell Saladin that they were coming to Jerusalem, with letters from the king of England, to visit the Sepulcher.

Those who carried this message were wise and valiant men, but all their prowess was rendered futile by their negligence. They rode on horses across the plain of Ramlah, as far as the Tower of the Knights, where they halted to search for El Adil. The truth is, they went to asleep for so long that, long after they went on again they saw in front of them Sir Andrew and the pilgrims marching in good

order into the hills. When these beheld the messengers coming after them, they stopped bewildered. "Ah, Seigneur God," cried the high men, "we are lost if the Saracens see us. Here are the ones who should have carried the message of our coming. If we go among them without warning them, they will attack us."

The messengers hastened on again, toward Jerusalem. They found more than two thousand Turks camped outside the city. After a long search they found El Adil and explained that our people were coming. El Adil reproached them bitterly, saying that it was an insane undertaking, and that they valued their lives little to march without a safe-conduct. Night fell as they spoke together, and the main body of Christians came up, without arms or plans. When the Saracens saw them, they confronted them with such menace that even the boldest would have liked well to be back at Acre then. They passed that night behind a wall.

The next day the Saracens went before Saladin, and begged that he would let them avenge themselves on the pilgrims. But Saladin at once summoned his officers and told them that the Christians had his safe-conduct to go to the Sepulcher and make their pilgrimage.

Ambrose himself went with the second throng, that met the first pilgrims coming out of the Holy City at dawn. By then Saladin's guards were posted along the road, and the crusaders felt safe.

We passed through the hills, and came to the joyous height, from which Jerusalem can be seen. Then our hearts were glad. We knelt as all those do—and ought to do—who come hither. We saw what we could—above all the tomb in which was placed the body of the Lord after death. Some of us put offerings there, but the Saracens snatched them away. After that we only gave silver to the captives, men of Europe and the Syrian coast, who were in bondage there. We gave them our offerings and they said, "God requite you!"

We went to the right, upon the mount of Calvary, there where the Cross was planted, there where the rock had cracked asunder. We came to this place, and we kissed it. From there we went to the church of Mount Sion, all ruined. Then we hastened to see the holy table where the Lord once seated Himself and ate, and we kissed it also, but we barely stayed there for the Saracens were seizing the pilgrims from our train and hiding them in caverns, three or four at a time. . . .

Then we went, much disturbed, to the grotto wherein was the Lord when he was taken. Filled with pity and yearning, we kissed this place and we shed hot tears—for there were the stables and the horses of these servants of the devil who defiled the holy places and threatened the pilgrims. We left Jerusalem then, and returned to Acre.

Saladin remained as generous in his hour of victory as he had been before the stress of the war. When Richard wrote to him requesting that the French—who had not shared in the drawing up of the treaty—be forbidden to visit Jerusalem, the sultan replied that he could not withhold his permission from some of the crusaders after giving it to all. He bade the worthy bishop of Salisbury who led the third contingent of pilgrims ask a boon of him, and the bishop, after a night of thought, requested that two Latin priests be allowed to remain at the Sepulcher to perform Mass, morning and evening.

When Richard announced that at the end of the truce he would return and wrest the land from the Moslems, the sultan responded gravely that if he must lose the Holy Land he would rather lose it to Richard than to any other man.

The English king had been convalescing at Haifa while the survivors of the crusade took ship for the long voyage through the autumn storms. Here he was joined by his queen Berengaria who nursed him in his pavilion within the shadow of Carmel by the gardens of Elijah's tomb. She was to have only this one month of quiet with the Lion Heart.

She had left her home to follow him upon the crusade, and for a moment at the wedding in Cyprus she had come before the eyes of the world. Thereafter, she is no more than a name—heard of from place to place in the footsteps of her stormy warrior. Richard would not take her with him, and she sailed from Acre to the shelter of the papal court in Rome, where she lingered on learning that Richard had been made captive.

For a while then she rested at the Plantagenet court, with Queen Eleanor at Poitiers, but Richard did not seek her there. A story is told that he sent for her on his death bed,

but it is only a story, and the name of Berengaria was heard no more after his end.

She did not go back to her father's court of Navarre, nor would the Plantagenets give her aid or countenance. It is known now that she lived in obscurity for years in a town within the hills of Anjou, her only visitor a passing cardinal.

Richard took ship early in October on a single galley with a small escort. His homefaring was no simple matter, for by now his brother John was settled in England, his own partisans scattered, and nearly every reigning prince of Europe his enemy. When he boarded the galley, he went to his cabin at once, and the sail was hoisted. Not until the next dawn, when the Syrian coast lay beyond sight, did he appear on deck.

How, untroubled by the dangers ahead of him, he turned into the Adriatic, to try to pass through the German lands in disguise, and how he was recognized by his royal bearing, sought by the man he had offended at the siege of Acre—Leopold of Austria—and held for ransom by the emperor, is a tale that has been told often.

Saladin waited on the coast until it was known beyond doubt that the English king had sailed. Then, in the Haram of Jerusalem, he dismissed his officers and turned his thoughts to the needs of peace. For three weeks he inspectēd the new frontier with the conquered fortresses. He would have liked to go back to Cairo, that he had not seen for ten years, but he was troubled by lassitude and by the fasting which he now undertook to make up for the Ramadan fasts that he had been obliged to omit during the campaigning. When the rains began, he went to the court at Damascus, hunting a little and listening to the talk of learned men. Thither he summoned his faithful kadi toward the end of February.

Baha ad Din found that the sultan had secluded himself and would see no visitors, although many waited in the anterooms of the palace. When the kadi, however, was announced, Saladin ordered him admitted and greeted him with genuine pleasure, sitting in the garden beneath the bare poplars. A tray of fruit and sweetmeats was brought out to them, and Saladin only tasted the food, while he spoke of his greatest

wish—to make the pilgrimage to Mecca in the coming spring. The autumn pilgrims from the south, he said, were already returning upon the Hadj road, drawing near to Damascus.

The next day [Baha ad Din relates] he sent for me, and I found him seated on a bench in the garden, having around him the youngest of his children. He demanded if any people were waiting to see him, and, hearing that envoys of the Franks were there as well as the amirs and higher officers of the state, he gave orders to admit the ambassadors to him.

One of his young children, the amir Abou Bakr—of whom he was very fond and with whom he was accustomed to make sport—began to weep at seeing these men who had shaven cheeks and strange garments. Then the sultan excused himself to them, and dismissed them without hearing what they had to say. In these last days he had given up his receptions, explaining that it troubled him to move about. Indeed he suffered from weariness and another thing.

Many fasts had remained for him to undergo, since he had not observed them during his frequent illnesses and the vicissitudes of war. At Jerusalem he had commenced to make up the omitted fasts, and this injured his health. His physician blamed him much for doing as he did. The sultan would not listen, saying, "No one may know what will come to pass." So he had continued to fast until he had made up all that was lacking.

He asked if I had news of the [pilgrim] caravan.

"I met some of the travelers on the way hither," I answered. "If it had not been for the mud, they would have arrived to-day. But to-morrow they will enter the city."

He then said that he would go to meet them, and gave order to mend the road and drain away the water—for the season was still rainy. After that I withdrew, noticing that he lacked his usual vivacity.

Friday morning he went out, mounted. Leaving the servants, I hastened to join him, and just at that moment he met the caravan. In it were Sabah ad Din and Karadja 'l Yarouki whom he greeted warmly, as was his habit with the older men.

It was a magnificent sight this day, the inhabitants of the city coming out in a mass to meet the caravan and see the sultan. I noticed for the first time that the sultan had not his quilted *khalat*, without which he never went forth on a horse. When I asked about it, he had the aspect of waking from a dream, and demanded the

garment, but no one could find the master of the wardrobe. It seemed strange that the sultan should be asking in vain for the *khalat* that he was never without.

I asked if there was no way of returning to the city without passing through the multitudes. He said yes, and took a by-path that led through the gardens. We followed after him, but I felt oppressed fearing for his health.

Coming to the citadel, he entered, crossing the drawbridge as usual. It was the last time that he went out mounted. That evening the sultan was troubled by extreme lassitude, and a little before midnight he had an excess of fever.

Twelve days later, on the third of March, 1193, died the Malik en Nasr Salah ad Din.

Although Baha ad Din and the sultan's companions had expected it, they left the palace that day in profound grief. Damascus mourned, the shutters drawn over the shops, and the bazaars deserted. Beside the body of the man who had led them for twenty years with unfaltering patience, the old *imams* read from the leaves of the Koran.

When Saladin's son took the sultan's place at the head of the carpet for the noon meal, the companions of the dead sultan felt the stab of grief anew. When they called upon the treasury for money to pay the expenses of the simple funeral, they found almost nothing in the palace.

He who had possessed so much [Baha ad Din explains] and such great riches, he did not leave in dying more than forty-seven dirhems and a single piece of Syrian gold. He left neither goods, nor house, nor furnishing, nor village—cultivated land, or any other kind of property.

Saladin had sacrificed years of his life to keep the field against the crusaders, and his spirit had been as simple and fervent as that of any Christian crusader. He had kept inviolate his ideal of personal honor—more exacting than the Christian code of chivalry. He was a Kurd, ruling over Turks and Arabs for the most part; the glorious first days of victory were followed by the hard years of conflict with the crusaders from overseas, and the Moslems had grown weary of the

long war.[1] Saladin's last months—even when embassies came from Constantinople and the Caucasus to felicitate him—were disturbed by revolt in the east. It was the irony of his life that, at heart a scholar and a lover of peace, he had to be at war without respite.

They buried his body in the garden tomb, beside the north wall of the great mosque in Damascus, where the school children patter by on their way to the teachers, and the call to prayer echoes in the giant courtyard.

Above that courtyard, on the lintel of the sealed door, still stood the inscription of forgotten years: "*Thy kingdom, O Christ, is everlasting.*"

Neither Saladin's ability nor his zeal for the holy war descended to his three sons. They inherited variously Cairo, Damascus, and Aleppo and soon became engaged in differences with each other. As Saladin foresaw, his army was never assembled again and when the thre eyears' truce drew near its end the prince of Damascus was well content to renew it, while the crusaders on the edge of the Syrian coast were too weak to make any new effort toward Jerusalem. The Ayoubites—as Saladin's successors came to be called—allowed trade to take its natural course with the coast ports, and occupied themselves with fortifying their three citadels—Cairo, Damascus, and Aleppo. They were tolerant and cultured men, little inclined toward war, and it became profitable to them to allow the Italian ships to put in to the ports without let or hindrance.

Another man, however, had ambitions. Al Adil, a powerful influence in Saladin's day, physically strong and energetic—he could finish off a whole lamb at a sitting, and was at fifty-three still a great lover of women—began to gather into his capable hands the reins that death had taken from his brother.

[1]The ideal of Moslems then and for long afterward was that of a conquering despot. Such a man Saladin was not by nature. To-day, as a rule, the Moslems of Syria remember his name only, his buildings, and his uprightness of character. The mufti effendi of Jerusalem in a conversation with the author, said, "*Tamerlane fut la terreur du monde, Salah ad Din—un gentilhomme.*" And an Arab cavalry officer, on hearing his name mentioned, repeated, "Salah ad Din was a gentleman."

With large possessions of his own in the east, he waited until actual conflict broke out between the new prince of Cairo and the new sultan of Damascus. Whereupon he threw his influence upon the side of Al Aziz, the stronger, in Cairo, and became himself governor of Damascus. It was only natural, then, that he should be appointed atabeg or war lord of the two kingdoms when Al Aziz died, leaving an incapable son on the throne of Egypt. Arabs, Turks, and Kurds alike remembered the old patriarchal rule of the clans, by which the eldest able-bodied kinsman became chief of the clan. Thousands of Saladin's mamluks had kept together even while serving in the various armies. They had eaten of the salt of the dead sultan, and they favored Al Adil more than any grandson.

"Is it not disgraceful," said the Malik Al Adil, "for me, an old man, to be the atabeg of a child? I should have succeeded my brother the Malik an Nasr Salah ad Din. I gave up this hope out of respect for my brother's memory."

The words of the shrewd Kurd struck a responsive chord in the veterans of the army, and Al Adil was acclaimed sultan of Egypt. He had, of course, his old provinces to the east of the Jordan, and the Damascus country. Swiftly he extended his authority over much of Arabia and Jerusalem and southern Syria—so that he held together the nucleus of Saladin's small empire in the year 1198. The northern regions had broken up among minor chieftains.

When the crusaders advanced again, they found a shrewd and extremely capable sultan in command of the Moslem forces. Two years before there had been discord among the Moslems, but now Al Adil was master in his dominion.

XXIX

THE DREAM OF THE HOHENSTAUFEN. AN INTERLUDE

It is necessary now to look behind the scenes. The men who have played their parts upon the battlefield are engaged elsewhere, even Al Adil. They have returned, it might be said, to their homes; they have put aside the crusader's cross and have donned mufti, but they have not laid aside their swords. Again, they play the natural rôles of life, and what they are doing is most important.

In these years from 1195 to 1199 the curtain is drawn upon the theater of the war while there is truce in the Holy Land. Yet in these years vital changes took place in the aspect of the crusades. Old rôles were cast aside—some of them torn up—and new parts studied. Fresh ideas replaced old, and the stage itself was enlarged. We must look at Europe as a whole where the actors are at home.

The heavy losses of the years 1189 to 1192 did not dishearten the men of the cross. After all, the survivors had gained some victories, and many had visited the Sepulcher. They had stern stuff in them, and it seemed to them that another effort would redeem the holy places. Besides, a new generation was growing up, ready to take arms.

Jerusalem, in their eyes, was the road of salvation. Defeat, the priests told them, had been caused by their own sins. A greater sacrifice, a more fervent attempt, rightly led, and the Seigneur God would bless them by the restoration of His city. The visible, actual Jerusalem was still the invisible Eternal City through which they entered upon salvation. No doubt about that. It was as certain as the water of baptism, or the wine of the sacrament.

Those who failed to redeem Jerusalem lay under the anger of the Lord. The capture of Jerusalem would be a sign of the forgiveness of the Lord. The masses of Christendom yearned for this sign of victory. Preachers exhorted them, as once Peter the Hermit had done, and they took the cross anew by hundreds. Barons and valiant men, peasants and women prayed in the new cathedrals for the restoration of Jerusalem. The ribald and masterless serfs no longer appeared in the groups of crusaders; there was no place for them.

In the hundred years since the first crusade, things had changed. Undisciplined masses no longer hastened upon the *via Dei*. The resistless torrent of the first days had become a strongly flowing river guided into fresh channels. The first crusaders had spoken of their comrades as the soldiers of Christ. The popes, however, who had led the preparation for the crusades, called them soldiers of the Church.

But by now—unmistakably during the campaign of 1189–1192—the kings and princes of Christendom had taken the command. The popes still urged the war, but the monarchs led it. The obligation of the crusade now lay upon the crowned heads of the princes, and sons inherited it from the fathers.

For one thing, the feudal isolation of a century before was breaking up. The nests of the barons had been shaken down, and nations were taking shape. England was still a patchwork of lands on both sides the Channel, under the restless Normans—King Richard, redeemed at last from captivity by the last of the gold and silver, melted some of it from the vessels on the altars, was piecing together his dominion—warring with Philip-Augustus, who was making firm the foundations of France.

The pope urged both of them to embark again upon the crusade, and both refused point-blank. And without the leadership of powerful kings, no crusade could be undertaken.

The last hundred years had convinced the wiser heads among the Christians that Jerusalem could not be plucked out of the grasp of the Moslems by zeal alone. The Moslems themselves must first be defeated. The stronghold of the Moslems was Cairo—the only stronghold accessible from the sea. The sultan, Al Adil, reigned there. Even while Richard was on the Syrian coast, the leaders had debated an advance on Cairo. To capture Cairo, or a similar point, would be a stepping stone upon the way to Jerusalem.

Also, after the loss of some three hundred thousand lives in attempting it the Christians understood that the overland road through Asia Minor was closed. The mightiest of them, Frederick Barbarossa, had left his bones there in final proof.

Meanwhile the road over the sea had become more easy. Ships had grown larger; the great pilgrim traffic had accustomed navigators to take whole fleets to and from the Holy Land. And the stripling cities of Genoa, Pisa, and Venice had developed into young and sturdy sea powers.

On the whole, these thriving republics had borne their share of the labor of the crusades, but they had drawn profit from it as well—being Italian. Genoa and Pisa, barred in the beginning from the East by the Byzantines and Moslem pirates, had beaten a path for their ships in the track of the first crusaders. Their *fondacas* sprinkled the Syrian coast, and tapped the rich Asia trade.

They supplied the settlements of crusaders with the wool and furs and wines of the homelands, while they carried back the spiced fruits and silk and grain of the Syrian coast. But the Asia trade was the mine from which they drew undreamed-of riches.

The growth of this trade was felt in all the eastern Mediterranean. The Norman ports in Sicily and southern Italy—Palermo and Brindisi—became important. The fine harbor of Candia in Crete became a halfway point. But the real gate of gold was Alexandria, the port of Egypt, in Moslem hands. By enduring certain humiliations and paying well for the

privilege, the Italian seamen gained entrance to Alexandria. And Alexandria was a port of Cairo.

Every one of these factors played a part in the events that followed. It is well to see them clear—the leadership of the kings, instead of the Church; the closed road over the land, the open road over the sea; the plan to break the military power of the Moslems before advancing on Jerusalem; the growing fleets of the Italian cities, and the necessity of using them to transport the crusaders who had no fleets of their own.

In this period of suspense, most of the princes of Europe became crusaders, upon oath to aid in the holy war. The cry "Aid for the Sepulcher" was heard from the fields of England to the forests of Hungary. The only question was, who would lead the new army, and where would it strike?

The aged pope of the day could do little but exhort. A mightier figure came forward to take command, the son of Barbarossa, Henry, by the grace of God king of the Romans, and Augustus. The man who hoped, not without reason, to draw upon his shoulders the mantle of the Caesars.

Henry VI, the emperor, was a true son of Barbarossa, and a Hohenstaufen. Already head of the Holy Roman Empire, he ruled from the Baltic to the Tiber. The heart of his empire was the German *Reich*, the power in his hand, a multitude of valiant German swords. He had married Constance, heiress of all the Norman lands in southern Italy.

Out of that marriage came generations of strife. Yet, for the present, it raised the emperor high indeed. It brought him to the shores of the Mediterranean. At Palermo, in 1194, he was crowned king of Sicily. At the church of Bari the next year he took the cross from the hand of the bishop of Sutri. On this sun-warmed shore, the red Hohenstaufen dreamed, with his eyes to the east.

Perhaps, in other years, Barbarossa had inspired this dream. Certain it is that Henry turned his back upon the north. Had not the wayward Richard of England done homage to him, while in captivity? Could not he crush the stubborn Philip-Augustus, if it became necessary to do so? They

were fighting with each other, for the nonce, and no one dared disturb the mighty *Reich* that stretched from the castles of Lorraine to the pagan hamlets of Prussia.

In the mountain citadels of Sicily he dreamed, looking toward the east. To him journeyed Amalric of Lusignan, now, by the death of his brother Guy, king of Cyprus. He did homage to the emperor for the island; and a letter came from Leon, king of Armenia, announcing himself the vassal of the Hohenstaufen. So these two Christian states upon the edge of the Holy Land were under Henry's rule henceforth.

There was nothing petty in the emperor's dream. He meant to be, in fact, the Caesar of a new Rome.

He would extend his rule north from the hills of Sorrento to the great Lombard plain, joining Sicily to the German *Reich*. With all of Italy in his grasp, he could put to sea with his Germans and Normans. With great fleets at his service, he could retrace the frontiers of the Caesars. North Africa would fall, if he captured Cairo. That could be done.

It could be done in the crusade. As to the Holy Land, Henry had debated with his jurisconsults and they had agreed—startled, we may suppose—with their lord. Until then the conquests of the crusaders, held by various little princes, had been looked upon as the redeemed property of the Church. The Hohenstaufen conceived it otherwise. As Caesar and Augustus in the West, by divine will, was he not also the rightful lord of the East?

Whatever came into his hands in the East would be part of his empire, himself the sole lord. The authority of Caesar was not to be delegated to others.

There was, of course, an obstacle. In the East the ghost of the dead Caesars confronted him—Isaac the Angel lord of Constantinople, wearer of the purple buskins, who held the title of emperor of the Romans.

But Isaac was no more than a shadow, a Byzantine prince who had seen his fleets dwindle and his frontiers recede to the sea. For the present the Hohenstaufen contented himself with marrying his brother, Philip of Swabia, to the daughter of Isaac the Angel, thereby establishing a claim for future use. Not that he lacked sufficient excuse to attack Byzantium

—the Normans of Sicily, now his vassals, had determined to do so, and his father Barbarossa had suffered injuries while passing on crusade through the lands of the Byzantines.

So Henry dreamed of extending his power over the remnant of the former Eastern Empire, himself a very Caesar, master of Rome and the world. He would tread the road toward the rising sun—

"Thy dawn, O Master of the World, thy dawn!"

It was, indeed, an imperial ambition. And every particle of it was fated to breed strife thereafter.

The first step—the crusade. Henry dispatched a disciplined contingent under Conrad, his chancellor, to Acre by ship, while his archbishop anointed Amalric in the cathedral of Cyprus, and Leon in Tarsus. Fired by enthusiasm and by the memory of the dead Barbarossa—believing that the old hero would return to life to lead them to the Holy Land—multitudes of men took the cross to follow the Hohenstaufen and Henry prepared his fleets at Bari and Sicily.

Conrad's forces with the knights of Syria occupied Sidon and captured Beirut—although Al Adil roused to meet them, and took Jaffa on his own account. It was evidence of the new plan of invasion that the crusaders were content to lose the gateway of Jerusalem to gain the best harbor on the Syrian coast.

The Germans advanced into the hills and sat down to besiege the small castle of Tibnin. Here they delayed for two months until Al Adil brought up a relieving army.

And then they heard that, months before, Henry had died in Italy.

The death of the emperor broke up the crusade, and the Germans sailed back. They left, however, a new military order behind them, a German branch of the Hospital of St. John: "Brothers of the German House." To distinguish them from the Hospitalers, whose mantles were black with a white cross, these wore white mantles with a black cross, and they started to build a castle in the hills near Acre.

In these years, from 1197 to 1199, occurred events that altered the whole scene of the crusades. It was as if an in-

visible hand passed over the stage, removing the old actors and their cues, and bringing forward the new, to set the stage for the coming century.

Richard of England, after making peace with Philip, besieged the castle of a vassal in a fit of anger over some gold, and was struck down by a crossbow bolt—granting life and freedom to the man who shot the bolt before he died.

Henry VI, the mightiest of the emperors, died just before Innocent III, the mightiest of the popes, entered upon his pontificate.

Henry, once count of Champagne and now king of Jerusalem, fell from a window, dying of his injuries. Amalric of Lusignan, now king of Cyprus, married his widow, Queen Isabel—thrice a widow at the age of twenty-six—thus becoming king of Jerusalem.

The civil war among the Moslems ceased when Al Adil became sultan and transferred his capital to Cairo.

And in Constantinople Isaac the Angel was overthrown by a kinsman, and cast in prison after being blinded.

So ended the Twelfth Century. And Baha ad Din, finishing his long history of his beloved master, wrote these words that hold a prophecy in them: "So ended these years and these men who lived therein; they have passed away like dreams."

PART III

SNOW *lay upon the hamlets, mantling the thatched roofs, sliding from the whispering forest. Snow covered the arms of the cross by the highroad. The bells rang clear in the cold air.*

Men were marching through the hamlets, over the frozen rivers. They were looking toward the east and singing an old song. Loud and clear the song: Ave Maria—stella maris!

They were marching away on the old road. Under the arms of the forest they passed, treading over the snow, with staff and pack and sword. They were following the stars to the east.

But the bells had ceased and the stars grew dim, and new voices summoned them. Through mist and mere the voices called, and they followed with staff and pack and sword.

The road was lost in unknown lands, and the song of the road grew faint.

Ave Maria . . .

XXX

INNOCENT SPEAKS

WINTER mist covered the gray Tiber and drifted through the thick ilex trees by the brown basilica of St. Peter. But the sun beat down upon the mist, and the throngs of men and women could see clearly all that took place in front of the bronze doors. They had stood there for a long time, very patiently.

All their eyes were fastened on a slight figure seated under the portico, sheltered from both the mist and the sun. It was a small man, the face sharp and handsome, the gray eyes set close together. Ordinarily this man moved quickly and spoke, as they knew well, most eloquently. A few moments ago he had been Cardinal Lothaire, of the familiar Roman house of Conti. No more than thirty-seven years of age, and a distinguished Christian gentleman, thoroughly versed in matters of law and mysteries of the councils.

Now the episcopal miter had been taken from his head, and the princely tiara put on him.

"Take the tiara," a voice from the red circle of cardinals announced, "and know that thou art the father of princes and kings, the ruler of the world, the vicar on earth of our

Savior Jesus Christ, whose honor and glory shall endure through all eternity."

Other voices murmured a response. The crowd jostled and peered, while the men-at-arms thrust them back, and horses were led up. One of them was covered with scarlet trappings. And when the figure rose from the chair and mounted this horse, the crowd all saw that, without doubt, Cardinal Lothaire had become the pope, Innocent III.

A priest bearing a cross took his place before the horse. The white-and-gold standard of good St. Peter was lifted, while twelve guards ranged themselves on either side the new pope. Images of cherubim hung from their uplifted lances. Their horses sidled and snuffled, pawing the earth under the folds of the heavy embroidered caparisoning.

Behind the pope the nobles of Rome bearing their shields of arms jostled and whispered as they took their places, pushing ahead of rivals who were their feudal enemies on ordinary days. Knights in armor brought up the rear of the glittering cortège, and the watching crowd murmured its delight at all this splendor. Suddenly the bells of St. Peter's clanged and echoed.

The horses moved forward at a foot pace, while the high voices of young boys soared against the clanging of the bells. The choir marched in the procession. But the eyes of the crowd fastened greedily upon a horseman in black velvet, a gold chain about his neck. He was the chamberlain of the new pope, and from time to time he would put his hand into a stout wallet that hung from his saddle horn. Then he would raise his hand and scatter coins among the straining figures of the multitude. Ragged men struggled over the silver coins, and the men-at-arms thrust them back.

When the procession passed the face of a low building of dull wood the crowd roared with excitement and rage. An old man in a purple robe came out of the strange building, escorted by soldiers. His trembling hands held above his square cap a roll of parchment covered with a veil.

The crowd knew that this was the rabbi of the synagogue, bearing on his head the veiled roll of the Pentateuch. Before the scarlet horse the old Jew bent his head. He was asking, as

the rabbis had always asked, the mercy and protection of the new pope; but in the shouting of the throng his voice was lost.

The young Father of the Church looked into the faded eyes of the Hebrew, and uttered a few words of forgiveness. When he opened his lips the crowd fell silent, and when he had done voices shouted approval. The chamberlain tossed out coins again, and men jostled the rabbi in the purple robe to get at them. Leaning on their spears, the soldiers paid no more heed to him.

Burning through the mist, the sun gleamed upon the princely cavalcade as it reached the muddy bank of the river and paced slowly across the marble bridge leading to the island and the other shore.

An hour later Innocent III sat in state in his Lateran palace. He wore now a red girdle. From the girdle hung two heavy purple purses, smelling of musk. In the purses were gold pieces and the twelve ancient seals of precious stones.

One after the other, the members of his new court and council approached the pope sitting apart in his porphyry chair. They knelt before him to kiss the ring upon his white hand. And the face of Innocent was wan and tired before the last had withdrawn at the hour of candle lighting, and he could pray alone in the chapel of the popes, kneeling on the mosaic floor.

Gone were the years of controversy and the feuds of Rome. Gone were the ten years of struggling with the questions of the papal council. Innocent was now solitary and apart.

Beyond the darkening embrasures of the Lateran, the fortified towers of the nobles stood against the evening sky. Brown and bare walls, on every height, above the hovels of the commoners. Even the impassive Colosseum was a fortress.

Under the chapel and the walls of the gray Lateran soldiers paced, and spear tips shone in the dusk. Alone, Innocent meditated, in his hand the invisible key that could unlock all gates. Now at last, at his command, was the dread authority of the Church itself.

In the mind of the pope a new map was taking shape. When he sat with his councilors of state the only maps they

looked at were queer round drawings upon parchment, with a cross marked where Jerusalem lay, in the center of the circle. The rest of the world was no more than scattered names arranged around the Great Sea, with mountains drawn between the names, and towers leaning this way and that to represent cities. Round the circle angels and demons clustered, intertwined with Leviathans out of the sea, and pagan Turks.

But in his mind Innocent held a map of the world much more accurate than this.

He knew the different peoples, and the roads that the merchants followed, and the lines of far-off frontiers. He knew what fleets were built, and where and why—and the numbers of the pilgrims who sailed in them. All the structure of the Church was clear to him, from the lands of the greatest bishopric to the gardens of a solitary monastery. Everywhere he had eyes that served him—his legates at the courts of refractory kings, and his messengers in the palaces of the pagans.

Letters brought daily to the Lateran all conceivable tid ings. Innocent knew as swiftly as horses could bring the report the fact that Philip of France had divorced his wife Ingeborg, or that a new chapel had been built in Iceland. He knew what the king of the savage Hungarians said at table, off there in the east, and what merchandise the Venetians sold in Alexandria.

And in turn, letters went from his hand to all the corners of the earth. Letters that told a bishop when to wear his pallium, or advised the barons of unruly England to pay scutage to his dear son John, their illustrious king. He condemned the practice of usury in France in the same day that he censored the extortion from the Jews of Spires.

In this map that lay within his mind, Innocent was shaping an invisible empire. He meant to bring the lands of the earth under papal authority. In other days St. Augustine had written of the kingdom of God, and Hildebrand had dreamed of the spiritual dominion that would rule even emperors and kings.

To a certain Acerbius, a prior in Tuscany, Innocent wrote: "As God, the creator of the universe, set two great lights in the firmament of heaven . . . so He set two great dignitaries in the firmament of the universal Church. . . . These dignitaries are the papal authority and the royal power. And just as the moon gets her light from the sun, and is inferior to the sun . . . so the royal power gets the splendor of its dignity from the papal authority."

He said that power lay with the two swords, the spiritual and the temporal. One rested in the hand of the pope, the other in the hands of the kings. And Innocent never doubted that the spiritual sword must be raised above the temporal —mercifully but inexorably. Both swords belonged to the Church, and the temporal weapon was bestowed by it, to be used on its behalf. *All* power lay in the hand of the Church.

Innocent was sustained by an unswerving will, by inexhaustible energy. He had, moreover, the wide vision and the swiftness of thought of a most able statesman.

Realizing that the Church itself must be mobilized to take command, he was, if possible, more inexorable in reforming the clergy than in punishing laymen. He was rigid in punishment. Forgiveness followed. The sword of authority was never laid down.

"And so we order . . . the spiritual sword against all heretics. . . . The indulgence of sins to all those who faithfully and devoutly aid the Church."

Never did he fail to exact the last bit of retribution. When a whisper reached his ears of a superstition and a questioning that was rife among the hamlets of Gascony, he wrote to the archbishop of Auch: "You shall exercise the rigor of the ecclesiastical power against them. They may not appeal from your judgments, and if necessary, you may cause the people and the princes to suppress them with the sword."

An omen, here, of the terrible thing that was to come later. Innocent forced every issue to its end, however bitter the end might be. He said once, "Any evil may be endured to gain a worthy result." When Philip of France refused to take back Ingeborg—having married again in the interval—In-

nocent laid France under interdict until Philip was compelled to remarry Ingeborg, although he kept her in prison thereafter.

The sword of Rome glittered with a new splendor.

Of all the issues confronting Innocent, the crusade was the most insistent. Jerusalem lost, the long-treasured cross held by the far-off infidels, the crusaders clinging to the coast of the Holy Land, with their backs to the sea. Throughout Christendom the cry for the relief of Jerusalem was ceaseless and clear.

Innocent could not close his ears to this cry. He could not turn aside from the march to the tomb of Christ. The preachers of the Church had urged the war, and daily the alms boxes in the churches were filled by the hands of people who gave to the aid of the war.

And in the last century, immense advantages had come to the Church of Rome through the crusades. For one thing, men who took the cross placed themselves under the protection of the Church, which watched over their property during their absence; at such times, the crusaders were answerable only to ecclesiastical courts, and for the time being they became virtually subjects of the pope. They were expected to make gifts to the Church, although they were freed from the payment of other interest, and debts.

Innocent proclaimed this clearly at his first council:

"We decree that all who have taken the cross shall be free from all collections, taxes and other burdens. As soon as they take the cross we receive them and their possessions under the protection of St. Peter and of ourselves. . . . And until they return or their death shall be certainly known, their possessions shall not be molested."

So, in addition to collecting the great tithes for the crusades—which were cared for by the ecclesiastics until they were paid out to needy crusaders by themselves or the Templars and Hospitalers—the papal officers had a voice in the administration of bulks of lands, goods, and revenues. In this way the papal courts could intervene constantly in the affairs of the feudal lords.

They also gained the right of requisitioning property, and

of acting as mediators. In a crisis of the great conflict, the papacy served as counselor and treasurer to fresh multitudes. As the war flamed up, or died down, the prestige of the papacy with the common people rose and fell.

Innocent was not only obligated to champion the war, he was led to do so by his own interests.

"I hold nearest my heart," he said in a great council, "the delivery of the Holy Land."

There is no mistaking his earnestness. Victory in the war, the recapture of Jerusalem, the restoration of the lost churches —these were the keystones of the arch of empire at which he labored. And from the first this inexorable man threw himself into the preparation for the new crusade. He spared no one. A tax was levied, one twentieth of all the income of the clerics, and when the silver was slow in coming in, Innocent contributed one tenth of his own wealth, and of his cardinals'. "Prodigal with others," he stormed at the clerics, "misers with yourselves!"

He could be eloquent—no doubt of that. "What! You will not open your hands to aid the poverty of Christ! You would leave Him to be struck, scourged, and crucified anew. You, who preach to the laymen that they must sacrifice themselves —what do you give, besides words? Words! Where are your acts? Already the laymen reproach you with squandering the patrimony of Christ upon your dogs and falcons."

The barons who were occupied with their own troubles and quarrels also drew down the lightning of his indignation.

"They no longer pay attention when the pagans insult us and say to us, 'Where is your God? Look, we have profaned your sanctuaries. In spite of you, we hold fast the cradle of your fathers' superstition. We have broken the lances of the French. We have overthrown the efforts of the English, the strength of the Germans, the heroism of the Spaniards. We have massacred your people in such fashion as to put their children in mourning for ever. Your kings and nobles that we have driven long since from the Holy Land have gone back to hide their fears in the dens they call their kingdoms. They would rather fight each other than measure themselves against us. Nothing more remains for us to do

but to invade in our turn your Christian land and destroy it, even to the memory of your name.'"

Upon the launching of the new crusade hinged most of Innocent's plans. He spared no pains to learn the exact situation in the East. His cardinals journeyed to the Syrian coast, his grain ships sailed to the ports of the Holy Land; he corresponded with Roupen, king of the Armenians, and Amalric, king of Jerusalem; he called for reports from the Templars and Hospitalers, and even wrote personal letters to the Moslem princes. Clear indeed was the outline of the East, within the map of his vision.

And never had the prospects for a crusade been brighter. Great strength of disciplined men waited in the castles of the military orders; fleets lay in the harbors of the Italian republics. Only an army of European crusaders was needed—twenty thousand more men, perhaps, would be enough. For Saladin was dead—Al Adil removed to Cairo—and the divided Moslems could not withstand such an army.

Innocent heard that great throngs listened to his preachers, who went from church to church. One Fulk, curé of Neuilly, swayed the hearts of multitudes, as Peter the Hermit had done more than a century before. The common people followed Fulk about, and it was said that he wrought miracles by the laying on of hands—under his touch the blind saw again.

Just before Christmas of the year 1199 word came to the Lateran that Fulk had preached at a gathering during a tournament in Ecry-sur-Aisne. Men opened their purses to him—although some doubting souls dared ask of him an accounting of the silver. But the chivalry of northern France took the cross, in the midst of the tournament.

The great count, Thibault of Champagne, took the cross, and Louis, count of Blois, with the redoubtable Simon of Montfort. Even the young damsels had gone among the knights, offering crosses to them.

After the new year, Innocent heard that Baldwin, count of Flanders, had pledged himself to the crusade, with Marie his wife and Henry his brother. And before long the knights of southern Germany took the cross at Bâle. On the coast of

Flanders a fleet was making ready. True, a worthy abbot had said an awkward thing in Bâle: "The promise of salvation is certain, and the hope of gain in wealth is more certain."

But the crusade was launched, sufficient in numbers and valiant in spirit. The flower of French knighthood—chevaliers who held honor high and scorned personal danger—formed its nucleus. Months later these same chevaliers made an open-handed treaty with Venice for a fleet to carry them to the Holy Land.

For the transport of 4,500 knights and their horses, 9,000 esquires, and 20,000 foot sergeants, they agreed to pay the Venetians 85,000 silver marks, and to yield to the Republic one half of all the land they conquered. It was a one-sided bargain, but the Venetians would supply a number of war galleys.

Innocent noticed that the treaty only stipulated that the crusaders were to be transported beyond the sea, and that no mention was made of the coast of the Holy Land. He approved the treaty.

Then, in the winter of 1201, after the months of preparation and the sudden death of the count of Champagne, a visitor came to the Lateran. Boniface of Montserrat, brother of the Conrad who had been master of Tyre, had been elected leader of the crusade, to take the place of Thibault of Champagne. Now he requested an audience of the pope, and for hours he was closeted with Innocent.

What they said is not known. But the men of the Lateran whispered afterward that Boniface had urged leading the crusaders against Constantinople instead of to Jerusalem, and Innocent had refused to consent.

XXXI

THE CONSPIRATORS

Look for a moment into the East, with the watchful eyes of the Lateran palace. The first thing visible is the long barrier of the Adriatic, now fast becoming a Venetian lake. The Lateran is on most friendly terms with the Venetians.

Above Venice lies the farther portions of the great German marks—the German marks that have been the worst foes of the papacy. Just now, after the death of the Hohenstaufen emperor, his brother Philip of Swabia has been acclaimed emperor by some of the Germans, but is reluctant to take the crown away from the infant son of the Hohenstaufen, Frederick. So there is an interregnum in these German lands, and Innocent will not mend matters for Philip because he looks for no good from the hand of a Hohenstaufen—especially a Hohenstaufen whose mother was Constance of Sicily, so that the son holds lands to the south of Rome as well as to the north.

Instead, he is most amiable to the king of the half-pagan Hungarians—those horsemen who have come out of the East to dwell above the winding Danube. For the Hungarian will

act as a check upon the Swabian, at need. But Innocent looks more to the East, and he is sending his envoys among the wild Vlachs and the Bulgars below the Danube. He is extending toward these savage men the mantle of the papacy.

Meanwhile beyond the Adriatic and all the mountains of Greece lies the dwindling empire of Byzantium, harassed and tumultuous, its fleet vanished. The emperor of Byzantium is also basileus of the Orthodox Church that separated from Rome long since, and now looks upon the popes as usurpers. Years have been widening the breach between this Eastern church and the West. One is Greek, the other is Latin—one upholds the sanctuaries of Constantinople, the other the basilica of Rome.

Deftly and cautiously, Innocent is trying to cross the breach, to bring Constantinople back into the communion of Rome. The scholastic of the West is debating with the theologist of the East, and honors are about even. For Innocent can not change the memories of the Byzantines who still dress the stiff figures of their saints in cloth-of-gold.

Innocent is patient with the ghost of the Caesars. He is eager to bring the churches of Byzantium under the rule of Rome. But he threatens a little: the Venetians, having sucked gold out of Constantinople, hate the Byzantines, and the duke of Swabia has not forgotten the dream of the Hohenstaufen; the Normans of Sicily are like wolves, ready to hunt toward Byzantium.

"Think," Innocent bids this emperor in the East, "if the duke of Swabia be victorious, crowned emperor, master of Sicily—what peril for Constantinople!"

The emperor does think, but he hides his thoughts behind suave letters signed with red ink and adorned with an effigy in raised gold. In reality, Innocent desires nothing less than the conquest of Constantinople by the Hohenstaufen. That would place his worst enemy squarely athwart the gateway of the East. But he draws a sword halfway from its sheath, allowing the glitter of steel to be seen by the Byzantines, hoping that they will ally themselves to Rome.

This done, the void in his map of the East would be filled. All the pagans and near-pagans of the borderlands—Prus-

sians, Lithuanians, and Bulgars—can be converted to Rome; Byzantium can be induced to submit to Rome, and the Moslems of Asia Minor and the Holy Land can then be driven out by the crusaders, sent forth by Rome. The united East would be under the yoke of the papacy.

"Thy Dawn, O master of the world, thy Dawn!"

Innocent dreamed as the Hohenstaufen had dreamed.

Meanwhile lesser human beings wrangled and suffered and snatched at the power held by others, as they are apt to do. In Constantinople the old emperor Isaac the Angel, who built a mosque in his city because he was afraid of Saladin, had been overthrown by a palace revolution, and blinded and cast into prison. The new emperor called himself Alexis III, and carried on the negotiations with Innocent. But the son of Isaac, who was also named Alexis, managed to escape from prison and fled across the seas to claim aid for his father. He went, as it happened, to the court of Philip of Swabia, the Hohenstaufen who had married the Byzantine princess, Isaac's daughter.

The young Alexis appealed to Philip of Swabia for aid, in the first months of the year 1201. But Philip's hands were tied by the chaos in the German states. Alexis journeyed to Rome with his shabby elegance and his small entourage of Greek nobles; he gained an audience with Innocent, and found that the great pope would not intercede for him. After this Alexis returned to Philip's court.

He found there, awaiting him, a most able diplomat in a friendly mood—Boniface of Montserrat, who also had married one of the much-desired princesses of Byzantium. The three of them discussed the situation, planning ways and means to lead an army against Constantinople.

Philip would support such an undertaking, and would profit by it, but could not share in it; Alexis would be the figurehead of the invasion—the son of the dethroned emperor—and Boniface was willing enough to have a finger in the pie. They all knew the wealth of Constantinople, and the weakness of its defenders. Here was a world prize ready for the plucking! But how to go about it? How to raise an army?

How they pondered the question and what they said, we do not know. We are certain only that they were there together—the luxury-loving Alexis, the swarthy, eager Boniface, and the dour, silent Hohenstaufen. The Byzantine prince would make any promise to be installed as ruler of Constantinople—his blind father could not rule again. All of them had the same thought—that an army was already mobilizing near at hand. They were thinking, of course, of the crusaders. Boniface had just been chosen leader of the crusade.

If they could turn the crusaders aside to invade Byzantium, then Constantinople could be seized.

But two obstacles stood in their way. The crusaders themselves would refuse to go anywhere but toward Jerusalem. And Innocent could not consent to the invasion of a Christian empire by the crusade.

It was at Christmas of 1201 that the three princes talked together. Early in the spring Boniface traveled to Rome and tried to gain Innocent's support in the venture, as has been told above.

> But, learning that the spirit of the pope [a chronicler relates] was against this enterprise, he settled the business pertaining to the crusade, and returned to his own country.

Just who thought of the Venetians first is unknown. It might have been Alexis, or Boniface, or Philip. Or the Venetians themselves may have suggested the plan. But after failing with Innocent, the conspirators turned to Venice.

The city of the lagoons had old quarrels with Byzantium. Only a generation ago Venetian merchants had been massacred in Pera. The present doge of Venice, the old Dandolo, had been almost blinded by the Byzantines. Above all, the republic was gathering to itself little by little the islands that once had formed the chains of the sea empire of Byzantium—while the Byzantines raged against them, calling them "sea serpents."

Now the Venetians were to escort the army of crusaders across the sea. What if they could lead the crusade toward

Constantinople, instead of to Jerusalem? What if they sent the whole strength of their fleet to support the army?

Envoys are dispatched from the court of Swabia to the court of the doge, and men talk together behind guarded doors. No chronicler relates their words, but Boniface and Alexis are coming to an understanding with the doge. The shrewd Venetian considers the problems. He weighs the dangers—ponders the anger of Innocent. He is all for the Constantinople venture, that will yield new seaports, and gold, and vengeance. After all, his treaty with the crusaders only obligates him to transport them over the sea. A way must be found to lead them into the Dardanelles.

Time is short. Already the first contingents of cross bearers are entering the roads of Venice. They are crowding the camps, and their leaders——

A stroke of fortune favors the conspirators. It is soon apparent that the crusaders can not pay the full sum agreed upon to Venice.

XXXII

THE DOGE SAILS

It was then the end of summer—the summer of 1202. An unwonted bustle filled the canals, where the watermen pushed at the long oars of barges and the slim gondolas of the nobles slipped beneath the screened balconies of ramshackle wooden houses. A damp breath came from the mosquito-infested swamps, in the long evening hours when the merchants of the Rialto closed their shops and gathered upon the stone bridges where lanthorns hung and the air was heavy with the scent of aromatics and cinnamon.

From the balconies women watched, veiled and painted and guarded by eunuchs behind barred doors. For the lords of Venice were half-Asiatic in their tastes, and they had found women to their liking in the ports of Greece and the mountains of Circassia.

The merchants on the bridges wore doublets and cloaks of velvet and brocades of Damascus. They talked under their breath of prices over the seas, in the slave market of Tana, and in the silk *souk* of Alexandria. Some of them knew the worth of furs in the land of darkness where the Hyperboreans dwelt, but all of them held nearest their hearts

the secret privileges of trade, and written treaties that no court had ever seen.

For they were tasting a new and delightful power that had been born of the sea.

By the stone edge of the Riva degli Schiavoni clustered the shadows of ships, the high masts and the slanting yards tipping drowsily from side to side under the pulse of the swell. Bound thwart to thwart, the slender war galleys lay moored to great painted piles. Grotesque dragon heads and strange impassive women heads peered from the lofty prows in the glimmer of the mooring lanthorns.

In the harbor of the arsenal lay new galleys, waiting like inanimate sea serpents to be launched forth upon destruction. Over them towered the dromonds, fitted with two banks of oars and heavy square sails, with room in their depths for five hundred men or more. These were the transports of the soldiery. Giant busses attended them—pot-bellied sailing craft as high as the dromonds, some of them weighing all of five hundred tons. They had two or three masts, and no oars. Along their decks were ranged the timbers of siege engines and the barrels and hemp sacks that held the stores.

Lesser craft lay moored around these giants of the sea—broad shallow craft to carry horses and fodder: flat-bottomed *barbotes*, or lighters, to land men and horses upon the shore.

Men had labored for months at the quays to outfit this armada, which was great and strong indeed. For the first time the Venetians were going to carry an army oversea in their vessels, and it was whispered along the waterfront that the fighting craft of the Republic would sail with the crusaders.

Even at night the alleys and the canals were astir. Crusaders in mantle and tunic strolled over the bridges, pausing to enter a chapel to pray, or sitting down on the benches of a wine shop to eye the veiled shapes of the passing women. Wine cooled the blood, and made it possible to sleep in this lifeless air. And presently there would be no more taverns, and no more women.

By the doors of the palaces fiddles whined and beggars pressed forward to cry for alms whenever they caught sight

of the broad shoulders and clipped beard and long ringlets of a French lord.

In the open square in front of the domes of St. Mark's, the crusaders lingered to make the most of the nights that remained to them on shore. They strolled along the piazza, staring into open doorways, hailing comrades from the valley of the Aisne or the fields of Flanders. They wore light linen mantles and long hose, for they had left their armor in the barracks of St. Nicholas Island.

They talked impatiently of the long delays. Most of the chevaliers had emptied their purses during the months on the road, and had borrowed from those who still had silver in their wallets. Only a few bought the rare embroidered silks and the cleverly worked gold images of the Venetian shops, to send back by courier or Jew to the girls at home.

They were all eager to be aboard ship and on the way to the Holy Land. The Flemings who had departed long since must be there by now, and many crusaders had failed to appear at the rendezvous. The chevaliers did not wish to wait any longer, because they felt assured that they—the chivalry of the Loire and the Rhine—would be able to fight their way to the Holy City.

So they idled through the warm nights of Venice, while the ships rocked gently against the stone embankment, and the bells of St. Mark's summoned them to the hours of prayer.

One of them, the young castellan of Coucy, passed the time in his quarters composing a song. Humming under his breath, he traced words carefully upon a stiff parchment—for this was an important love song, to his wife:

> Beau sire Dieu, *how may I endure*
> *To leave the comfort and the courtesy*
> *Of my lady, whose sweet allure,*
> *Made her my delight and* belle amie.

He had all of a minstrel's skill, this Sieur de Coucy, and he was very earnest in making this song.

Beau sire Dieu, *now must I complain*
That she no more may comfort me,
Where I must go. No love will be
Like hers, that may not be mine again.

At the same time an older man, one Geoffrey of Ville-Hardouin, was writing down the happenings of the crusade. He was a soldier, a simple mind, and a very honest gentleman. He was, besides, marshal of Champagne, so that he sat in the council of the leaders, and came to know of the bargain that was made at this time in Venice.

So the count Louis [Ville-Hardouin wrote] and the other barons went off to Venice, and they were received with a great fête and great joy, and were lodged with the others in the Island of Saint Nicholas. Fine indeed was the army and the valiant men; never did any one ever see so many people, nor finer. And the Venetians furnished them with a trading place good and sufficient where everything could be bought for the horses and soldiery, and the fleet that they had made ready was so rich and fine that no Christian ever beheld better, with galleys and barges enough for three times as many men as we had.

Ah, what a pity that the others who went to different ports did not come there! Christianity would have been lifted up again, and the Turks cast down. The Venetians had kept their agreement very well, and now they bade the counts and the barons keep their part of the agreement and pay the money, for they were ready to set sail.

So the passage money was sought in the army. There were many who said that they could not pay their passage, and the barons took from them what they were able to pay. When everything was collected, they had only half the sum needed. Then the barons talked together, and said:

"Seigneurs, the Venetians have kept their promise, and more; but we are too few to make up the sum of money agreed on for our passage. For God, then, let each of us give what he can, to make good our promise. Because, if this army does not sail, the conquest of Outremer must fail."

Then there was a great disagreement, for the larger party of the barons said, "We have paid for our passages, and if they are willing to take us, very well; if they are not willing, we will call quits and

go to some other port." And the other party said, "We would rather put in all our wealth, and go ahead poor than to see the army separate and break up."

Then the count of Flanders began to pay in all that he had and all that he could borrow, and the count Louis did the same, and the marquis and the count of St. Paul and those who held to their view. You would have seen many fine vessels of gold and silver carried to the house of the doge, to make up the payment. And when all had paid thus, 34,000 marks of silver were still lacking of the sum agreed on.

Then the doge spoke with his people, saying to them, "Seigneurs, these men can not pay more, and all that they have paid belongs to us by the agreement. But our right to it would not be recognized everywhere and we would be blamed—we and our state. So we ought to compromise with them.

"The king of Hungary has taken from us the great city of Zara, in Slavonia[1] which is a most strong city, and never with all our efforts will we be able to recover it from him, unless by the aid of these men. We should demand that they aid us to conquer Zara, and we will give them a respite for the 34,000 marks that they owe us, until God permits us to gain it together—we and they, together."

So the agreement was made. It was strongly opposed by those who wished to divide the army, but soon the accord was made and approved.

Then everyone assembled round the church of Saint Mark. It was a very great fête. The people of the country were there, and the larger part of the barons and pilgrims. Before the Mass began, the doge of Venice, who was named Henry Dandolo, mounted the lectern and spoke to his people, saying:

"Seigneurs, you are joined together with the best men in the world in the highest undertaking that ever has been planned. I am an old man, and feeble, and I have great need of repose, and I am crippled in my body, but I see that not one of you knows how to command so well as I, who am your lord. If you wish to have me take the cross to safeguard and direct you, while my son remains in my place and cares for the country, I will go forth to live or die with you and with the pilgrims."

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[1]Zara lay within Hungary, and it does not appear that the king took it from the Venetians. Rather, the Venetians wished to take it themselves. Honest Ville-Hardouin had no suspicion of the treachery of the Venetians at first, and afterwards he was involved himself.

When they heard that, they cried with one voice:

"We pray you, for God, to grant this and do it, and come with us!"

Great was then the sympathy of the people of that country and of the pilgrims, for this valiant man had the best of reasons to remain behind. For he was old, and could scarcely see—since he had lost his sight from a wound on the head. He was of great heart.

He descended after that from the lectern, and knelt before the altar. They clothed him with the cross, on the back of a great cotton cloak—for he wanted the people to see it. And the Venetians began to take the cross in great numbers. Our pilgrims had joy and sympathy by reason of this cross that he took—because of the wisdom and prowess that he had in him.

Thus was the doge signed with the cross. Then they began to make over the galleys and the barges to the barons. So much time had passed that it was near to September.

Now listen to one of the strangest happenings and greatest adventures of which you have ever heard.

In these times there was an emperor in Constantinople, named Isaac; he had a brother named Alexis whom he had ransomed from a Turkish prison. This Alexis seized his brother the emperor and plucked the eyes out of his head, and made himself emperor instead by this treason that you have just heard. He kept his brother prisoner for long, with a son of his named Alexis.

This son escaped from the prison, and fled in a ship as far as a city of the sea named Ancona. Thence he departed to go to the king Philip of Germany who had married his sister; and he came to Verona in Lombardy, and lodged in the city, and found there a number of pilgrims and men who were going to join the army. And they who were with him, who had aided him to escape, said:

"Lord, here is an army in Venice near us—the best men and the best knights in the world, who are going oversea. So do you cry them mercy, that they may have pity on you and on your father, so wrongfully disinherited. And if they wish to aid you, then you will do all that they tell you. Perhaps they will have pity on you."

And he said that this counsel was good, and he would do it willingly. He summoned messengers and sent them to the marquis, Boniface of Montserrat who was chief of the army, and to the other barons. And when the barons met them, they marveled much and said to the messengers:

"We understand well all that you have said. We shall send a message to the king Philip and to your lord who is there, with him. If he

is willing to aid us to recover the Holy Land beyond the sea,[1] we will help to conquer his land for him, since we know it was wrongly taken away from him and his father."

So the messengers were sent to Germany, to the heir of Constantinople and to King Philip.

Before this, that we have told you about, tidings came to the army that made the barons and other men very sad. Messire Fulk, the good, the holy man who first preached the crusade, came to his end and died.

After this happening, a company of good brave men from the German empire arrived, to the joy of the pilgrims. The bishop of Halberstadt, the count of Catzenelnbogen, Thierry of Loos came with many other good men.

Then the galleys and the transports were divided among the barons. Ah, God, what good war horses were put in them. And when the ships were loaded with arms and supplies, and knights and sergeants, the shields were ranged along the rails and the sterns, and banners hung out, many of them very fine. And know that the ships carried perriers and mangonels as many as three hundred and more, and all the engines that are used to capture a city. Never did a fairer fleet sail from any port. They sailed from the port of Venice as you have heard.

It was indeed a scene to satisfy the eyes of the veteran Ville-Hardouin. The drifting vessels, bright with shields and banners, covered the lagoons. On the stone embankment throngs of Venetians waved and cried farewell. The heavy anchors were tugged up, at the blast of a trumpet, and the square sails hoisted.

Wind filled the sails, and spread the great red crosses out. Again the trumpets sounded, and men began singing. Some of them were weeping.

The red galley of the doge turned slowly, its prow pointing out to sea. On the gilded stern-castle, under the flapping banners, the doge sat beneath his pavilion of red satin, his aged face intent.

[1] *La Terre d'outre-mer.* The barons were interested in Alexis' story, but only replied that they would give Alexis aid *after* their Jerusalem campaign, if he would join them in that campaign. It must be remembered that the barons were not under the orders of Boniface. Several of them were equal in rank to the marquis; they had elected him merely head of the council and treasurer-in-general.

This first offer of the conspirators was not made known to the common soldiers.

He was leading out a great power of men and ships, and from that moment rested upon him the responsibility of the fleet and the fortunes of Venice. He was sailing to the east, yet his blind eyes were turned not to Jerusalem but toward the Dalmatian coast and the city of Constantinople.

XXXIII

WHAT VILLE-HARDOUIN SAW

HENRY DANDOLO, doge of Venice, was an old man, and he had reaped the harvest of his years. He had the pride of a princely family, and the wariness of a merchant-trader. He was past master of the finesse of intrigue, and he was perfectly willing to break his word in a good cause.

For the French crusaders on his ship, no doubt he had tolerant contempt—they knew almost nothing of this part of the world, and took no pains to hide their ignorance. Moreover, he held them in his debt. And he meant to use them in every possible way before granting them quittance of his debt.

The zeal of the crusaders stirred no enthusiasm in this aged man, ripe with worldly wisdom. Dandolo served only Venice. He was prepared to gamble hugely to gain his end, which was not the destruction of the weakening empire of Byzantium but the creation of new Venetian colonies from the débris of the empire.

And the doge was, as Ville-Hardouin observed, an unusually brave man. Even Dandolo, however, would not have

ventured to sail with his fleet direct to Constantinople instead of to Jerusalem. Ignorant as the crusaders were, they would know east from south; besides, he must bring them to Constantinople in a friendly mood, or nothing could be done. Innocent, also, must be induced to give his approval to the venture—no easy matter.

So the council of Venice had hit upon the expedient of Zara. If the crusaders could be led to capture Zara, they would be smirched. They had vowed not to lift weapon against Christians, and Innocent had warned them against making war on Christians. They would then be obliged to send to the pope for his pardon. If Innocent cast the weight of his anger upon the crusaders, and excommunicated them, the crusade would be broken up.

The Venetians did not believe Innocent would do this. And if he pardoned the crusaders for Zara, they could expect that he would be equally merciful in the case of Constantinople. Meanwhile, time would be lost at Zara, and the autumn storms would make the Jerusalem voyage difficult. The Venetians themselves cared little for the papal interdict. The council of Venice felt itself a match for the *Curia* of the Lateran.

In one way or another, Dandolo managed to take a month to sail down the Dalmatian coast to the break in the line of hills where stood the walled port of Zara. There, matters went well enough. True, a *religieux*, the stern abbot of Vaux, presented himself before the barons, and exhorted them:

"Seigneurs, I forbid you, on behalf of the pope of Rome, to attack this city, for it is a Christian city, and you are pilgrims."

And certain of the pilgrims, being out of sympathy with the bargain, talked to the people upon the wall of Zara, saying that they need fear no attack from the crusaders. Dandolo put a stop to that at once.

"My lords," he reminded the leaders, "you have promised that you will aid me to take this city, and now I ask that you redeem your promise."

It was soon done. The fleet forced a way into the harbor, breaking the chain across the channel; the crusaders set up

their engines, began their bombardment, and mined the wall. In five days the people of Zara made terms—went out with their lives, leaving the city abandoned to the invaders. Dandolo asked that the crusaders occupy one half, and the Venetians the other.

"My lords," he explained, "winter is come, and the season of storms. We shall not be able to move out of here until Easter, because we can not obtain supplies along the way. This city and country, however, is well able to supply what we need."

To this the crusaders agreed without discussion, and as Dandolo expected, they sent envoys to the papal court to explain why they had turned aside to Zara. In time the response came. Innocent, when he heard the tale of the messengers, had been angered. "Instead of winning the Holy Land," he had exclaimed, "you have shed the blood of your brothers!" But he took no action against them, merely warning them to keep together, and to hold to the crusade.

The next incident was the arrival of Boniface of Montserrat who had lingered behind to watch events in Rome, and to keep in touch with Philip of Swabia.[1] He was soon followed by couriers from Germany, bearing a new offer from Philip.

The Hohenstaufen's missive began by reminding the crusaders that they were at war on behalf of God against injustice, and that the young Alexis had been the victim of injustice. Now, Alexis could aid them to conquer the Holy Land.

If they aided Alexis to recover his empire the Byzantine heir agreed to place Constantinople under obedience to Rome. Since they had spent all their money, he agreed to

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[1]While Boniface was in Rome, the emperor Alexis sent envoys to the papal court to protest urgently against the invasion of Constantinople by the crusaders—rumors of the undertaking having reached his ears.

Innocent hesitated, and discussed the matter with the council of cardinals. Then, privately, he warned Boniface not to let the crusade go toward Constantinople but publicly he responded to the Byzantine envoys that only by submission to the Church of Rome could they gain his intercession in their favor. He tried to profit from Alexis' fears to bring about the forced union of the churches.

Actually, either willingly or unwillingly, he paved the way for the conspirators. Boniface, delighted, hastened to join the crusaders. From that time he and Dandolo, knowing that Innocent had threatened Constantinople with the crusaders, played their hands freely.

give them 200,000 marks of silver. And he would go with them in person to the Holy Land, or send instead 10,000 men at his expense, for a year. More than that, he agreed to keep 500 armed men in service at the Holy Land as long as he lived.

Philip's envoys explained that they had full powers to conclude the treaty. They added that so fine an offer had never been made to any men before, and that the crusaders would be lacking in spirit to refuse it.

This appeal was most cleverly worded. It challenged their pride, and promised aid for the Jerusalem venture at the same time; it offered an enormous amount of money—and most of the crusaders had had time to appreciate the humiliation of an empty purse. Moreover, it held out the bait of winning Constantinople for the pope.

In their minds Constantinople was the queen city of the earth, fabulously rich, filled with precious relics of the saints and other wonderful things. What a feat of arms to conquer this abode of emperors! And what spoil to be had! And how well they were equipped for just such an enterprise. The marquis favored it, the doge approved it, and all the Venetians were eager to set out.

Gravely the leaders of the army talked it over in council. They talked it over, Ville-Hardouin remarks, in more than one sense, because they could not agree. The dour abbot of Vaux spoke for his party, pointing out that many of them would not agree to go anywhere but toward Syria.

"*Beaux Seigneurs*," others answered, "in Syria you can do nothing. The parties who have left us and gone on by other ports have been able to do nothing. Only through Egypt or the land of the Greeks can the Holy Land be recovered, if it is ever recovered. If we refuse this agreement we shall be shamed."

And the abbot of Loos preached to them, saying, "By this agreement we can best regain the Holy Land."

At the end of the debate, the great lords cast their decision for Constantinople, saying that they would be disgraced if they did not go. Boniface of Montserrat, Baldwin of Flanders, Count Louis, and Count Hugh went to the residence of the

doge and pledged themselves to go, by oaths and sealed treaty. Only a dozen signed the treaty.

A large party of the crusaders could not be weaned away from Syria. Renaud of Montmirail begged Count Louis for a ship, and sailed to the south with his knights. Daily, men went off, angered, in the vessels of the merchants who put in with supplies. Five hundred managed to get a ship for themselves, and were caught in a storm off the coast, every man being drowned. Another party dared journey by land, and the remnants of it drifted back to Zara after fighting with the Hungarians.

Hard-headed Simon of Montfort went off, with the abbot of Vaux, after securing a safe-conduct from the king of the Hungarians. A whole division of the army planned to withdraw, and was only restrained by a pledge that within two weeks after the capture of Constantinople they would be given ships to go to Syria.

Meanwhile Alexis appeared with a small following, to be greeted ceremoniously by the doge, and paraded among the curious crusaders. Dandolo had no wish to delay. Swiftly the walls of Zara were dismantled and the ships loaded again and headed down the coast.

The Venetians had won the contest in the council chamber, but the open sea and the walls of Constantinople lay in their path.

It was a strange fellowship that set forth in the spring of the year 1203 toward the east. No one man held the command, as in the good ship *Argo;* a band of men went together into a common enterprise—no heroes, certainly, but very human beings. Boniface, the Jason of this voyage, might indeed have been dazzled by the fleece of gold; yet his hard and practical mind beheld only political advantage to be gained. The blind Dandolo, intriguing for his city, dreaming perhaps of personal vengeance, caught at every bit of land that might build an empire in the seas. The weak Byzantine prince, having promised what he never could pay, hoped to wrest a crown for himself out of the delusion of others. And the crusading barons, drifting from one entangling pledge

to another, understanding little, dreamed of a great victory and glory to be gained.

They were entering the east, of which the minstrels had sung—whence the Magi had come with their gifts, and whither Roland once had sought Cathay. And they beheld new marvels with eager interest.

The galleys, the long oars swinging, drifted into the great harbor of Corfu, overhung by gardens and forested hills. For three weeks men and horses rested in fields where white lilies grew and orange trees blossomed. Then all the ships went forth again. "And the day," Ville-Hardouin explains, "was fine and clear, the wind fair and mild; they raised the sails to the wind."

Along the rocky shore of Greece they coasted, over the water that became clear and blue and tranquil as the days passed. On the hills they saw the tiny domes of churches and the terraces of vineyards. At the island called Andros some of them landed with horses and arms, to climb the hot hills and bring in the astonished Greeks to submit to the young Alexis. Dandolo had seen to this.

Passing from one island to another, they crossed the drowsy Aegean, putting in at evening to moonlit shores, where they landed to search for water while the galleys lay like sleeping ships upon the tideless inlets. And in these days died Guy, the castellan of Coucy, who had made in Venice the song to his wife. His body, covered with his shield, was slipped into the sea. The minstrels, however, did not forget his song.

> Beau sire Dieu, *now must I complain*
> *That she no more may comfort me*
> *Where I must go. . . .*

In mid-June, when the evenings were long and tranquil, they passed the brown peak of Lemnos and sailed in toward the mainland. A narrow gut of water opened up before them. On the left hand, a long gray spit of land appeared, and on the right dark hills above a low shore. Sea gulls clamored over the masts, swooping down to drift upon the troubled water behind the ships.

Some of the crusaders knew that this strait was the Hellespont, or Dardanelles, and that Troy had stood on the breast of the right-hand shore. Most of them called it the Arm of St. George, because the priests who were wisest in such matters assured them that the tomb of the warrior saint was near the water. At all events, it seemed to be a good omen.

They put in at a small town clustered around a cathedral, beneath a clay bluff, and the people of the town came out to submit to them. They christened the place Avie and waited there eight days for lagging ships to come up.

Then they emerged from the strait with a strong wind, the scattered vessels filling the stretch of water as far as a man could see. They crossed the open stretch of the Marmora under a cloudy sky, while fishing craft fled before them like gulls. In the haze toward the east they made out a low shore, and upon a point of the shore the gleam of white marble.

And then [Ville-Hardouin relates] the ships and the galleys came into full sight of Constantinople. Yet you should know that they looked long upon Constantinople, as those who had never seen it. For they never thought that there could be in the world so rich a city, when they beheld these high walls and strong towers by which it was encircled, and these rich palaces and lofty churches, of which there were so many that no one who had not beheld them could believe it—and the length and the size of this city that was sovereign of all others in the world. And know that no man was so hardy that his flesh did not crawl at the sight; and this was no marvel, for never was so great an affair undertaken by men since the beginning of the world.

XXXIV

AT THE SEA WALL

It was, indeed, a great undertaking. No doubt about that. As they rowed up and down before the city, the crusaders felt awed by it. And they remembered that the Arabs, Huns, and Bulgars had gone against it in vain. No foeman had penetrated its walls in eight hundred years.

To their eyes, it loomed huge and forbidding, and they gazed at it in a kind of fascination. Constantinople had been built where the Marmora Sea narrowed to the Bosphorus Strait. It was like a triangle, blunt at the point where the great dome of the Sancta Sophia rose above the gardens of the palaces. On the right-hand side of the triangle the city wall faced the sea, so that the water washed against the dark stones. On the left-hand side the wall curved around the crook of the Golden Horn, which was the long, narrow harbor of the city.

Along the base of the triangle, the wall faced the land. Here a deep moat made approach difficult, and the great towers of the inner wall covered the smaller, outer barrier. These towers, square and solid, rose more than forty feet from the ground; and they had arrow ports opening on every

side. The crusaders had heard tales of the machines upon the wall—machines that cast forth the deadly Greek fire.

They saw that the narrow mouth of the Golden Horn was barred by a great chain hanging between two towers. Behind this chain clustered the Byzantine galleys and merchant

CONSTANTINOPLE AT THE TIME OF THE CRUSADES

The palaces, except for the Blachernae, were at the point of the city, marked III. In Ville-Hardouin's narrative Chrysopolis is called Skutari.

ships. On the opposite side of the Golden Horn stood the suburb of Galata on a steep height, with a round gray tower brooding over it.

Dandolo and his Venetians knew the lie of the land very well, and the doge did a wise thing. He advised the barons to land for a while on the side of the Bosphorus opposite Constantinople, to rest and to forage for supplies in the open country. Naturally, the emperor had gathered all his soldiery in the city, and they would not be molested on this side of the strait.

His advice proved to be excellent, for the crusaders took possession of the suburbs of Chalcedony and Skutari, quarter-

ing themselves in the deserted palaces of the Byzantines—marveling much at the splendor of them—and occupying themselves with gathering in the nearly ripe harvest from the fields, while they lingered on the heights and stared at the domes and gigantic statuary of the city a league away.

To them the emperor sent an envoy, offering them a treasure of gold if they would depart and leave his land.

Conon de Béthune rose and answered the envoy:

"*Beau sire*, you have said to us that your lord is amazed because we, lords and barons, have entered his lands. Into his lands we have not entered, for he gained them wrongly and sinfully, and against God and right. They belong to his nephew who is here with us—the son of the emperor Isaac.

"But if your lord wishes to submit to the mercy of his nephew, and surrender to him the crown and the empire, we will pray him to pardon him.

"And if you do not return to us with this submission, do not return again."

The envoy did not appear again, and the barons made ready for their adventure. In Baldwin and his youthful brother Henry they had experienced soldiers well able to weigh the hazards they faced. The first thing they did was to divide their small army into "battles," or corps, with Baldwin and Henry in command of the advance corps. The Burgundians, Lombards, and Germans formed the rear corps, under Boniface.

Dandolo aided them but could no longer dictate to them, for this was a matter of fighting, and the barons knew what they were about. The Venetians wanted the attack to be made upon the sea wall, pointing out that the crusaders were not numerous enough to hold the open country against the Greeks—which would be necessary if they attacked from the land side.

The barons answered that that was all very well, but they had no skill at fighting upon the decks of ships; they were accustomed to their horses and the feel of firm earth beneath them, and they would fight in their own fashion, upon land. So it was agreed that the Venetians would attack the sea wall while the crusaders stormed the land wall.

After sunrise of the day chosen for the crossing, the leaders mounted and went to their commands, while the bishops and clergy passed among the soldiers hearing their confessions and taking their last testaments. The men did this readily, in good spirits.

It was a fair morning, with little wind. The groups of knights and esquires led their horses down to the waiting barks. Everyone was in mail, the helmets laced; the horses were saddled, and draped in heavy leather and iron mesh. Men-at-arms filed into the transports, their shields slung on their backs. Then the oared galleys were brought up, and made fast to the heavier transports in order to cross the strait more quickly. The young Alexis appeared with his grandees, greeted the barons, and entered his ship. A trumpet sounded and others answered down the shore. The fleet moved out into the strait.

It did not make for Constantinople; instead it bore down on the Galata shore, where a division of the Byzantine army was encamped. The galleys made straight for the stone quays and the gravel beach. With Greek arrows hissing around them, knights leaped from the first transports, waist deep into the water.

No one hung back. The sergeants followed with the archers. Arrows sped back at the Greeks, and the crusaders pressed forward with leveled spears. The Greek soldiery gave way, retreated down to the Golden Horn. The crusaders took possession of the abandoned camp, while others went to look at the Galata tower.

They did not hurry. All the army was brought across and quartered along the Galata shore, in the abandoned warehouses of the Jews. The next morning the garrison in Galata castle made a sally but did not manage to take the crusaders unaware. Knights and men-at-arms fought hand to hand with the Greek mercenaries, driving them back toward the harbor, and following them so close that some of the knights entered the tower itself. The hill and fortress of Galata were now in their hands.

Meanwhile the Venetians forced the harbor. Some of the war galleys were driven at the chain, and one of them,

equipped with a steel beak upon its prow, succeeded in breaking the taut chain. The galleys rowed in, spreading havoc among the Byzantine vessels along the Golden Horn, until they held the whole stretch of water.

For four days the knights consolidated their new position, repairing bridges that the Greeks had broken down and gathering in fresh supplies. On the fifth day they moved again, around the long crook of the Golden Horn, to the land wall of Constantinople. They kept close to the water, to have the support of the ships on their left flank.

Baldwin and his barons climbed to the top of a hill crowned by an old abbey, and surveyed the wall in front of them, at the corner where the land wall meets the wall of the harbor. Here, behind round towers, rose the terraces and flat roofs of one of the great palaces, the Blachernae in which the emperor himself had his residence.

While the siege engines were brought up by the industrious sailors, the crusaders built a palisade and ditch around their new camp, and beat off sallies by the Byzantines who came and went elsewhere at will out of the various gates of the land wall.

The crusaders' camp only faced a single corner of the mighty triangle of the city, and they were too wise to scatter their men. Within the city there were perhaps a dozen men of all sorts to one soldier outside. But the ranks of the Byzantines were filled by mercenaries, Norsemen of the famous Varangian guard, Slavs and Saxons and Turks—stalwart warriors who fought for hire and kept faith with their masters so long as they were well led. Greek noblemen and horsemen from the provinces made up the cavalry, and the armed rabble of the city helped man the wall. But the real strength of the emperor lay in the mercenaries who alone were capable of standing against the mailed swordsmen of the West.

Meanwhile the skillful Venetians had put their ships in order for the attack on the sea wall. They set up engines on the lofty fore and after decks of the galleys, and they erected flying bridges at the crossyards upon the masts, attaching ropes to the bridges so that they could be lowered at any given moment by the crew below. By bringing their galleys

alongside the towers, Dandolo's men hoped to be able to lower the flying bridges against the summits of the towers, and cross to the wall, covered by the missiles from the engines and crossbows, of which they had a great number.

All this occupied ten days and not until the seventeenth of July were the trumpets sounded for the assault. What followed is related by Ville-Hardouin:

Four battle corps went to the assault, with the count Baldwin of Flanders. Against the outer wall near the sea—and this wall was well manned by English and Danes—they placed two ladders. The attack was strong and good and hard. By sheer force some knights and two sergeants climbed up the ladders and gained the wall.

Fifteen men in all got upon the wall and fought body to body, with sword and ax. Then the garrison made a new effort, and cast them back savagely, so that two were made captive.

Thus the attack was checked on the side of the French, with many men wounded, and the barons very angry.

While this was happening, the doge of Venice had not neglected the battle. Nay, he had arranged his galleys and ships into a line, and this line was three crossbow shots in length. The ships drew in to the shore[1] that lay under the wall and the towers. Then you would have seen missiles fly from the mangonels of the ships, and the bolts of the crossbows shoot up, and volleys of arrows.

Those within the wall defended themselves strongly, while the ladders of the ships drew so near that in several places they were hacked by swords and lances. The tumult waxed so great that it seemed to engulf all the land and the sea. And the galleys did not dare to lay themselves against the shore.

Now you will hear of a rare deed of bravery. For the doge of Venice, who was an old man and almost blind, was all armed upon the fore-deck of his galley, and he had the gonfanon of Saint Mark held before him. He cried to his men to bring the galley against the shore, or he would wreak punishment upon their bodies.

So they do this—for the galley touches the shore, and they leap out. They carry the gonfanon of Saint Mark ashore before the doge. And when the Venetians see the gonfanon of Saint Mark ashore, and the galley of their lord against the land, then each one deems himself shamed and all make toward the shore. Those in the open boats leap upon the embankment, and those from the great ships

[1]This was on the harbor side where the wall stood back a little from the water, to give room for landing places and steps.

climb down into barges and gain the shore—most swift and eager in their rivalry.

Then you would have seen a marvelous and great assault. For the banner of Saint Mark was seen rising over one of the towers, though no one knows who carried it thither.

It was a rare miracle. Those within flee and abandon the wall, and those outside enter in, swift and eager in their rivalry. They take twenty-five towers[1] and garrison them with their men. And the doge gets into an open boat, and he sends a message to the barons, to let them know that twenty-five towers have been taken. The barons are so joyous that they can hardly believe that this is true.

When the emperor Alexis saw that they had entered the city in this fashion, he began to send his men against them in great numbers, so that it seemed as if they could not hold out. Then they cast fire down between themselves and the Greeks, because the wind was behind our men. The fire caught in the houses and spread so that the Greeks could no longer see our men, and had to retire.

Then the emperor Alexis of Constantinople went out with all the forces of the city, by other gates which were all of a league distant from our camp. He drew up his men in battle array in the plain, and they rode toward our camp, and when our French saw them, they ran to arms everywhere. But the count, Baldwin of Flanders, was guarding our engines under the wall of the Blachernae.

Six of our corps of battle ranged themselves outside the palisade of the camp, while the sergeants and esquires formed on foot behind them, and the archers and crossbowmen behind them. And they waited thus before the palisade, which was wise—because if they had sallied into the plain they would have been overwhelmed by the numbers of the enemy who had forty battle corps to our six.

The emperor Alexis rode near enough for the archers on both sides to begin to shoot. When the doge of Venice heard of this, he made his men leave the towers they had taken; he hastened toward the camp, and was himself the first to set foot to shore, to lead his men to us.

Then the Greeks dared not cast themselves against our line, while our men would not leave the palisade.

When the emperor Alexis understood this, he began to withdraw his troops; and when the army of pilgrims saw that, they rode forward at a foot pace. The Greeks retreated within the wall.

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[1]The towers of the Byzantine city were built within bowshot of one another. The Venetians held nearly a mile of the wall.

So the battle rested on this day, for it pleased God that nothing more should happen. The emperor Alexis went off to his palace, and the men of the army returned to their tents and disarmed, for they were weary enough. They ate and drank only a little, for they had little to eat or to drink.

The siege was not resumed the next day. For that same night Alexis, the usurper emperor, took his daughter and a thousand pounds of gold and slipped from the palace. Unknown to the city, he entered a boat with a few followers and sailed into the Marmora, leaving his wife, the rest of his family, and his people to face the situation.

Whereupon the Greek nobles naturally released the blind Isaac from prison and carried him in state to the Blachernae —so that there would be at least the figure of an emperor on the throne, and the cause of the war could be removed.

Messengers were sent out to the young Alexis, bidding him enter the city to take his place in peace beside his blind father.

The crusaders were rather amazed at this sudden change of front; but they did not trust the Greeks overmuch, and sent envoys in to remind Isaac of their treaty—that Constantinople was to be placed under the Church of Rome, that 200,000 marks of silver were to be paid them, and 10,000 Byzantines sent with them to the Holy Land.

The old Isaac had not been told of this, and it troubled him. He replied that it was a great deal to do, but he would agree to carry out the conditions.

The army of crusaders rejoiced. Now at last the way was clear to Jerusalem. The matter of Constantinople had been settled, the season was good for the voyage, and in a month they might be off the coast of Acre. Some of them escorted Alexis in to his father, and they made no objection when they were requested to move back to the Galata camp to avoid rioting between their men and the Byzantines.

A date was set for the coronation of Alexis, and the first 100,000 marks of silver—half the sum agreed on—were paid them by Alexis. Of this, half went to the Venetians by the agreement that the Italians were to divide evenly with the westerners all that was gained on the crusade, and the

French lords paid up in addition the 34,000 marks that they owed the seamen of the lagoons for their passage.[1]

This done, they expected to sail. But Alexis appeared in their camp, to ask for more time explaining that the empire was in chaos, with the usurper in Adrianople, and he had no means of raising the rest of the money. If they left, he insisted, he would have a civil war on his hands.

Behind the pleading of the weak Byzantine was the strong will of Dandolo. The doge had no desire to take his fleet to Jerusalem. He wanted to penetrate Byzantium, and at this moment of mutual suspicion he was in his element. He caused the crusaders to remember that the term of their original treaty with him expired at the end of September. It was now the end of July, and two months would not serve to gain anything in the Holy Land. But if they would agree to remain at Constantinople until spring, they could seat Alexis firmly on his throne, collect the money due them, and sail for Syria with all the summer before them. He would agree to put the fleet at their disposal for another year.

The barons were fairly bewildered by this artful shifting of the issue. It was perfectly true that they had only hired the Venetians until St. Michael's day, about two months distant. They had also sworn to aid Alexis to regain his throne, and now it seemed that they would have to reconquer all his empire for him. A deep anger stirred in them, but it did not find a voice. Boniface, the marquis, understood very well the intrigue that was sapping their will, but he kept his own counsel, having his own game to play.

The barons withdrew to talk matters over. It seemed to them that they were chasing a pot of gold beneath an elusive rainbow—yet the gleam of gold dazzled some of them who

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[1]It needs a moment's reflection to appreciate the really brilliant profiteering of the Venetians. They had now been paid the full amount of the 85,000 marks to transport the crusaders to Syria, and besides had 50,000 tribute from the Byzantines. They had Zara and several islands to boot. Yet the crusaders were not halfway to Syria, and the Venetians had no intention of taking them.

Nor could Dandolo be taken to task by the letter of his agreements. He had obligated himself in the first place only to transport the crusaders "over the sea," which he had done. He had agreed to accept Zara as a "respite" for the balance due him, and he had granted the respite.

had seen the splendor of Constantinople. Others demanded ships to sail at once to Jerusalem.

In the end [Ville-Hardouin explains] the affair was settled in this manner: the Venetians made oath to keep the fleet here for a year counting from Saint Michael's day; the emperor Alexis swore to give them all that he could; the pilgrims swore to support him and remain here for a year.

Dandolo now could afford to wait for the inevitable to happen, and happen it did. While the barons were off on an expedition to bring the northern country into submission to the new emperor, rioting broke out between the crusaders and Byzantines in Constantinople. During the rioting some men set fire to the ramshackle wooden houses along the harbor. It is not certain who they were, but they may well have been the Venetians. The conflagration, fanned by a high wind, spread to the heights and destroyed some of the fine palaces and churches, even damaging the Sancta Sophia.

The barons, returning, were sincerely grieved by the havoc, but the Byzantines were angered beyond remedy. Some of them tried to destroy the Venetian fleet with fireships in retaliation, and the sailors barely managed to save their vessels.

By now the nobles of Constantinople were ready to be rid of the young Alexis and his blind father. They chose a certain Murtzuple for leader, and brought about one of the palace revolutions that Constantinople had witnessed so often. Alexis and his father were seized in their sleep, hurried out of the Blachernae and into cells underground, where the blind man soon died from poison. Alexis, surviving poison, was strangled by assassins and ended his miserable life on the first day of the new year 1204.

The gates of Constantinople were closed against the crusaders, who, with two years of frustration gnawing at them, were now enraged in their turn. Without hesitation they prepared to storm the city.

But Dandolo, with his opportunity at hand, was careful to call them into conference and to have them agree that if

they took the city, a new emperor should be chosen by six Venetians and six crusaders, and a quarter of the city allotted to him. The other three quarters were to be divided equally between Venetians and crusaders, and the outlying country also.

The blind man was looking into the future with a vision more clear than that of the barons, who had all their eyes to see and yet saw not.

XXXV

BYZANTIUM FALLS

SPRING had come to the Bosphorus, and the Judas trees were in bloom again. The poplars of the palace gardens thrust their green tracery against the white marble walls, and sheep grazed in the meadows by the reservoirs.

It was Palm Sunday, but no procession of children carried branches through the streets of the city. In the churches the priests prayed in their robes of cloth-of-gold, lifting weak hands toward the altars. Behind the priests veiled women wept, and slaves stood ill at ease listening to the echoes of a distant tumult. A north wind was blowing through the streets of Constantinople, ruffling the dark water outside the wall.

And from the wall itself, borne by the wind, came the roar of human conflict that had begun the day before and had not ceased. Above the pulse of the swell that beat against the embankment could be heard the splintering of the oars of galleys, the crashing of the engines hurling rocks and blocks of marble that soared briefly into the air and dropped upon the decks of the barbarians without. The cries and shouting of men rose and fell with the wind.

The barbarians, clad in iron, were attacking the wall, climbing over the bodies of their dead, mad with the lust of

fighting. They had been cast back and broken, but they were pressing on again.

So the veiled women prayed, stifling the fear that clutched at them—ladies of the court, wrapped in dark cloaks, princesses born in the purple chamber, Greek slaves, pallid beneath enameled head bands—they vowed candles to the shrines and offered jewels to the saints, if only the wall would hold against that human tide.

They had been told that the engineers had built wooden hoardings upon the parapet, to ward off the flying bridges of the galleys, and that engines had been placed upon the towers to keep the ships away. They had seen smoke rising from the wall, and drifting over the city, like some huge ill-omened bird with wide dark wings.

By the gates of the churches black slaves clustered around the empty litters of the women. With a pounding of hoofs, Greek youths galloped past, brave in gilded breastplates and plumed helmets. Through the swirling dust came companies of swordsmen, long-haired Norsemen marching with a steady tread beside swarthy Armenians. Against the sky, their blue shubas whipping in the wind, Jews stood on the housetops watching the wall with anxious faces.

Only the wide forums were deserted except by bands of restless dogs, and men who ran at times past the lines of impassive statues. Long-dead emperors turned stony faces to the tumult, poising scepters in uplifted arms. No one heeded them. They belonged to the day when Constantinople had been mistress of all the seas—a city guarded by the angels, indifferent to wars.

In the taverns by the harbor, slightly wounded soldiers flung themselves down on benches, and shook their heads over goblets of red Cyprian wine. They were silent, or they talked hurriedly in varied tongues. Some said that the leader of the Ducas family, the one called Murtzuple, who wore the purple buskins of an emperor, had sallied out to meet the Franks in the field, taking with him the stone figure of the Virgin. And now the figure was bound upon one of the masts of the crusaders' galleys, for all to see. An evil omen, that.

And some had seen a galley driven by the wind against a tower. From the bridge of the galley a Venetian sailor and an armed knight crawled through one of the embrasures. The Venetian was killed, but the knight still held out in the tower.

But the Franks had been beaten once, and they would be again, for twenty thousand men could never break through the wall. Soon it would be dark, the fighting at an end.

So they talked, gulping their wine, while the smoke grew thicker overhead. Voices clamored in the street, and a cry went up:

"Four towers are taken by the Franks."

The roar of conflict upon the wall spread down into the nearest alleys. A band of Varangians, their scarlet cloaks dim in the twilight, marching toward the wall, was met by a rabble of Greeks running without arms. The guardsmen drew their swords and slashed a path through the fugitives, stepping over the bodies. With a steady stride they went on, until smoke swirled down and hid them and they came to a line of burning houses whence women fled carrying bundles in their arms.

The women clutched at the giant Norsemen, who had kept order in the city since forgotten times. But the flames were an enemy that no sword could deal with, and the officer in command of the guards gave an order. The Varangians forced their way out of the multitude toward the nearest palace.

Across the city by the reservoirs, a horseman emerged from the cover of a garden. He wore gray iron mesh from his foot to his chin, and the reins of his horse were iron chains. A round steel cap was close-drawn upon his eyes. In his right hand the crusader held a bare sword. Curiously, he glanced about him, and urged his charger down into the wide avenue that led toward the heart of the city. Other horsemen followed the knight. They had come through the splinters of a postern gate, and the only enemies they met were the deserted tents of a Byzantine regiment and the grazing sheep.

Over the drifting smoke the red glow of sunset deepened in the sky. Against the striped walls of the Blachernae dark bodies of French archers assembled. Robed priests fled from

the little domes of the Pantokrator, and in the shadows some women wailed. A crusader dismounted from his horse, and went into the church. Before his torn and dusty surcoat, he held his shield advanced.

But the basilica was empty—lighted only by tapers that fluttered at the wind's touch, beneath a holy picture. The crusader looked at the altar on which silver boxes rested, and at the stiff forms of mosaic saints. Turning on his heel, he went out. When darkness had quite settled down a group of spearmen with a lighted torch stamped into the church, and snatched up the silver boxes.

Baldwin rode among his men, ordering them back into ranks. Esquires carrying spluttering torches trotted behind him, so that all could see the wedge-shaped helmet and the shield bearing a rearing lion that marked the count of Flanders from the other lords. When he met groups of knights he bade them dismount and go back to their men. He said that three battle corps of the crusaders were within the wall, but if they pressed on into the main city, they would be lost in the labyrinth of streets. He ordered his standard planted in an open square, and men-at-arms hastened up with benches and planks to feed the great fires that lighted the square. Around the fires crouched captives, gypsies and Jewish hags, and wandering children—for in these open fields the gypsies and riff-raff had camped. Black goats galloped aimlessly among the horses. The knights began to count the palfreys and the mules their men had gathered in.

Beyond the light of the fires the darkness was filled with a rustling and a pattering of feet. Shadowy forms slipped over the roofs. Beyond this fringe of sound and movement lay Constantinople, hidden and vast, with the domes of great churches and the shafts of lofty columns standing upon the heights against the stars. Here and there a cresset blazed, fanned by the north wind, or a torch flickered and vanished.

The crusaders looked into the darkness drowsily, wondering what new magic the artful Byzantines were concocting against them, and what was happening to the treasure troves that were secreted in this citadel of strange peoples and unknown tongues. They heard Venetian trumpets sound at

intervals on the harbor wall, to their left. And messengers came in from the marquis Boniface whose troops were quartered a little ahead of them, between them and the Venetians —so that the invaders held this northern corner of the city. All but the great Blachernae palace at the point of the corner, where Varangians and slaves still guarded the gates. It seemed to Ville-Hardouin that it would take months to capture the citadels of this place.

Either the suspense proved too much for Boniface's Lombards or they began to loot the houses around them. For they set fire to the wooden tenements. The flames leaped the narrow alleys, and licked their way under the roofs, soaring beneath the blast of the wind, eating a path to the south, with no one to check them. Soon the glow of the conflagration could be seen from all the walls.

In the courtyard of the Bucoleon the Greek cavalry was summoned by Murtzuple, and orders issued to form for an attack upon the crusaders. Attended by his officers, the leader of the Byzantines ascended the street that wound past the deserted Hippodrome, and led through the small forum where the giant statue of Constantine towered. Here they waited a while, talking together in low voices, until Murtzuple gave a word of command and the cavalry advanced at a trot along the wide avenue that ran due east. Soon the crusaders were far distant, on their right, but the officers increased their pace, galloping into the enclosure of the Golden Gate, where the bronze portals swung back at Murtzuple's command.

While the Varangians on duty at the gate watched grimly, the cavalry, with Murtzuple in its midst, swept by them and out into the country, abandoning the city to its fate.

When the nobles at the Bucoleon heard that Murtzuple had fled, they gathered behind closed doors, and elected one Theodore Lascaris emperor. But the fire was approaching the center of the city, and the Byzantine grandees had no heart for further fighting. They hastened to their households, and, collecting their families, fled to the southern harbors on the side away from the Venetian galleys. There

they entered ships and put out into the Marmora, the north wind driving them toward the Asiatic shore.

At dawn, when a pall of smoke hung over the city, the crusaders advanced again but found no one to bar their way. A procession of bearded priests came out, bearing a cross, to beg for mercy for the city.

As if by a miracle, Constantinople lay in the crusaders' power. At first the leaders were wary. Keeping the men in ranks, they occupied the forums and sent mounted patrols through the streets. Seizing the gates, they let in the Venetian bands and the crusaders who had been guarding the camp. It was soon clear that the armed forces of the Byzantines had disbanded, except in the palaces. And while the leading barons turned their attention to the palaces, the soldiers and knights began to loot.

The fire was spreading over a portion of the city as large as Rome, Venice, and Paris all put together, and the frightened Byzantines were trying to drag their possessions from its path. Sword in hand, the crusaders ran into the courtyards of the nobles' palaces, while frightened slaves fled before them.

They snatched up silk carpets from the floor, and tore down candelabra. Then they came to the sleeping chambers, where unimagined luxury met their eyes. Red-faced Norman peasants and stalwart Burgundians stared open mouthed at walls covered with damask, at toilet tables of onyx and ebony inlaid with ivory. While the Byzantine ladies hid their faces, and eunuchs cowered in the corners, the soldiers tore open cabinets—emptying their bundles of poorer loot, to load themselves anew with amber bracelets and jeweled combs. Laughing, they poured the finest perfumes from crystal and enamel jars. Pricking the robed eunuchs with their daggers, they bade the stout creatures lead them on to greater treasures.

In the long corridors they met other men-at-arms carrying gold-plated statues on their shoulders. They investigated organs hidden in the ceilings, and shouted into whispering galleries that had served the lords of Byzantium who wished

to overhear the talk of guests or servants. And they poured themselves goblets of heady Greek wines.

Some of them went back when the looting was done, to seek out the handsomest of the women slaves. They had never seen girls so fair and sweet smelling as these creatures from the East—dark-haired Persians, with fire in their blood, and yellow-maned Circassians with tall strong bodies. Fearfully, the women submitted to these uncouth men.

Elsewhere, Venetian merchant-warriors with more discerning taste hurried with their servitors into the galleries of the Hippodrome where priceless statues of pagan gods stood—the handwork of Greek masters. Prying gold plates from the wall, and guarding their trove with spear and ax, they climbed to the courts of the Sacred Palace, to snatch down tapestries woven with gold thread, and to pick up here an ivory image, there a tissue of silk heavy with pearls.

Meanwhile a stranger ravaging was going on. Warrior-priests of the army—zealous bishops with their retinues—sought out the oldest of the churches and forced their way into treasuries where, in gilt reliquaries, were kept the most famous relics of the world. Long had Christendom heard of the virtues of the heads of the Apostles, entombed beneath the basilica by the Bucoleon; throughout the city were gathered the most precious tokens of the East—the bones and the wood and the hair that had been conveyed from the *sancta sanctorum* of the elder East. And the eager prelates and chaplains struggled to get into their hands these treasures beyond price, to carry home in triumph to their own churches.

The stout bishop of Halberstadt, taking advantage of the absence of the marquis who was at the Bucoleon, made his way into the imperial chapel and marched off with all the relics.

We saw [relates Nicetas, a Byzantine court secretary who witnessed the downfall of the city] what shocks the ears to hear. Those wicked and unfortunate men used on their tables the holy vases and ornaments of the churches. It is not possible to hear with patience what they did at the great church—they seized the altar

table, a marvel of rare beauty, and divided it into several pieces among the soldiers. Into the most secret parts of the churches they led pack mules and saddled horses, so that dung and blood profaned the splendid floors.

Then a woman, weighed down with sin, an ambassadress of all the furies, servant of evil spirits and priestess of black magic, sat herself down in the patriarch's seat. Mocking CHRIST, she sang in a broken voice, whirling around and leaping up and down!

They tried to force an entrance to the mighty Sancta Sophia, where they had heard the very chains of St. Peter were kept in a golden casket, and the gifts of the Magi in alabaster vases, and the ancient crown of Constantine set with jewels bestowed upon it by the angels—when the great barons checked them, and rode through the smoke-filled streets to begin the struggle with the fire. Ville-Hardouin relates what happened then:

The marquis Boniface of Montserrat rode along the shore, straight toward the Bucoleon; and when he appeared there, the palace was surrendered, those within being spared their lives. There were found the greater part of the high-born ladies, who had fled to the castle—and the sister of a king of France, who had been empress, and the sister of the king of Hungary, who also had been empress.

The Blachernae surrendered to Henry, brother of Count Baldwin. There also was found a treasure past reckoning, as in the Bucoleon. Each of these lords garrisoned his palace with his own men, and placed a guard over the treasure.

And the other men, scattered through the city, also won a great deal. The booty was so vast that no one could count it—the gold, the silver, the vessels of precious stones, the satins, the silks, the garments of vair and ermine.

Each one took up quarters where he pleased, and there was no lack of places. Great was their joy in the victory that God had given them, for those who had been poor were now full of riches and delight. And they did well to praise our Lord, for with no more than twenty thousand men they had taken captive four hundred thousand or more.

Then it was cried through all the army by the marquis Boniface, who was chief of the army, and by the barons and by the doge of

Venice that all this wealth must be brought and collected together, as had been promised and pledged, under pain of excommunication. And three churches were chosen as the places, and put under guard of the most trustworthy French and Venetians. And then each one began to bring in his trove and put it with the rest.

Some did it willingly, and some with an ill grace; for greed held them back, and the greedy began henceforth to keep things back, and so our Lord began to love them less. Ah, God, how loyally they had borne themselves until this moment. And now the good suffered on account of the evil.

The wealth and the booty was collected. The part belonging to the churches was gathered together and divided between the French and the Venetians, half and half, as they had agreed. And do you know how the rest was divided? Two men-at-arms on foot had the share of one mounted man-at-arms: two mounted men shared with one knight. And know that not a single man, whatever his rank or prowess, had more than that—unless he stole it.

As to these thieves, the ones who were convicted, great justice was done upon them, and plenty of them were hung. The count of St. Paul hung one of his knights, shield upon his neck, who had kept out something. You can know how great was the treasure, not counting what was stolen or went to the share of the Venetians, when it was reckoned at four hundred thousand marks of silver, and ten thousand horses.

For the moment, the glitter of Constantinople dazzled the eyes of the adventurers. Each man found himself with more wealth than he could manage to take care of, and at their feet lay the Queen City, violated and defenseless. Even the clergy, exulting at their possession of the rival Greek sanctuaries, applauded them:

"We say to you that the war is good and just. And if you mean faithfully to conquer this land and bring it to obedience to Rome, you will have the indulgence that the pope promised you—all those who die here confessed."

And that, Ville-Hardouin says, was a great comfort to the barons and the pilgrims.

But Dandolo had no illusions. When they met to select one among them as emperor of the new conquest, he would not have his name put forward, and he instructed the Vene-

tians serving in the electoral college to oppose the name of the marquis of Montserrat—who was too politic and too powerful a man to be acceptable to the Republic. So, when the electors came to a decision the bishop of Soissons went out to the waiting crusaders at midnight, and cried:

"Seigneurs, we are agreed, and we name for emperor, in this hour of Easter-tide, Count Baldwin of Flanders and of Hainault!"

A straightforward and simple soul. In the ensuing division of lands among the leaders of the crusade, the Venetians and Montserrat profited most. Baldwin himself was awarded little more than half the city of Constantinople; the Venetians had the remainder, with the rich Sancta Sophia. Somehow or other Dandolo convinced the barons that two fifths of the city must be put in possession of the Venetians before dividing the outlying territory.

Montserrat got northern Greece, and the other lords received various cities, with the accompanying titles of duke or seigneur. But these outlying cities were not yet conquered, and most of them never beheld their new feudal lords. The Byzantines, preparing to defend Asia Minor, and the Bulgars, pressing in from the north, waged war on the victors.

But the astute Venetians gleaned the following harvest for themselves—the district of Epirus in Greece, Acarnania, and Etolia; on the Adriatic they gained the great city of Durazzo, and smaller Arta, with the rich Ionian islands to the south, Corfu, and the three keys to the gulf of Corinth, Cephalonia, Zante, and Santa Maura. This gave them control of the Ionian Sea, as well as the Adriatic. They received also, in southern Greece, the port of Patras and other places. Out in the Aegean, Naxos, Andros, and Euboea. They took the peninsula of Gallipoli which controlled the Dardanelles, and they claimed the trading centers of Rhodosto and Heraclea. They took Adrianople, north of Constantinople, and Dandolo squeezed in the island of Crete, by secret treaty with Boniface.

Many of these points were never captured, in the long struggle with the Byzantines. But the Venetians gained more than even Dandolo could have hoped for, and they laid

thereby the foundations for their great sea empire.[1] For a while the council of Venice pondered moving the Serene Republic from the lagoons to Constantinople.

This done, they were more than ready to assist at the coronation of Baldwin, who was to be, in their scheme of things, the police power of their new conquests. The soldier was to fulfill the duties of a soldier. For three weeks the adventurers prepared robes and regalia for the ceremony, and one Robert of Clari has left an account of Baldwin's crowning in the vast Sancta Sophia, under the dome where mosaic saints looked down through drifting incense with incurious eyes.

When the day was come, they mounted their horses, and the bishops and the abbots and all the high barons went to the palace of Bucoleon. Then they conducted the emperor to the church of Sancta Sophia, and when they arrived at the church they led the emperor around it, into a chamber. There they took off his garments and boots, and they shod him anew in footgear of vermilion satin. Then they clad him, over the other garments, in a rich mantle all charged with precious stones, and the eagles which were outside were made of precious stones, and they shone so bright it seemed as if the mantle were alight.

When he was thus nobly clad, they led him before the altar, the count Louis carrying his imperial gonfalon, and the count of St. Paul carrying his sword, and two bishops holding up the arms of the marquis who carried the crown.

And the barons were all richly clad, for there was neither Frenchman nor Venetian who had not a robe of satin or silk. And when the emperor went before the altar, he kneeled, and they lifted the mantle from him.

When he was anointed, they put back the mantle on his shoulders. Two bishops held the crown upon the altar, then all the bishops went and took the crown and blessed it and made the sign of the cross upon it and put it on his head. When they had crowned him, they seated him upon a high chair, and he was there all the

[1]Visitors to Venice will recall the trophies of this conquest, displayed by the city—the bronze horses atop St. Mark's, the group of porphyry kings at the corner of the church, and the great paintings in the Ducal Palace, showing the storming of Constantinople and the crowning of Baldwin by the hand of the doge, instead of by the bishops who actually performed the ceremony.

time Mass was sung, holding in his hand the scepter and in the other hand an apple of gold with a little cross atop it.

And then they led him out, to a white horse, and brought him back to his palace of the Bucoleon, seating him in the chair of Constantine. The tables were placed, and the emperor ate, and all the barons with him, in the palace. When he had eaten, the barons went away to their dwellings and the emperor remained alone in his palace.

Apart from the people of the West, the young Baldwin with his wife Marie sat on the throne of the East. But he was never emperor in more than name. Like his namesake, the first Baldwin who ruled Jerusalem, he spent his days in the saddle, riding from one menaced point of his frontier to another, with the Byzantines clutching at his back, and his lords spending their lives in vain attempts to conquer the fiefs he had bestowed upon them. The Roman clergy came in and tried to reconcile the Byzantine priesthood to the new order, but they could not. The patriarchs of Constantinople abandoned their churches rather than submit. And the spoil taken from the half-desolate city was soon spent.

Hundreds of the adventurers went off to Syria, to redeem their vows, and Baldwin himself died in battle against the tsar of the Bulgars.

For two generations the barons of the West dwelt in the half-deserted palaces along the Bosphorus, but their venture had ceased to be a crusade. It became a feudal state, a colony of the West, and in the end Constantinople drove them forth again.

So, for the first time, by the treachery of the Venetians, a crusade had been turned aside from Jerusalem. The great crusade-power had been bridled and driven to other work.

XXXVI

THE MASTER OF THE WORLD

MEANWHILE a greater than Dandolo had passed judgment on the crusaders who turned adventurers. The pope, Innocent III, had forbidden the enterprise and then had heard that the fleet had gone against Constantinople; months later he was informed of the capture of the city and the flight of the Byzantines.

Not until then did he display his anger and excommunicate the Venetians. Papal authority had been slighted, and Innocent would never allow that to go unpunished. Yet, having drawn the sword of retribution, he sheathed it. Verily, he exclaimed, this conquest had been God's will, because no man had intended it. He lifted the sentence of excommunication, and gave amiable assent to Baldwin and his paladins to remain in Constantinople. He even sent his legates thither, with reinforcements of knights.

The crusaders had won the Byzantine empire for Rome. A void in his map had been filled.

And no Caesar of Rome ever welcomed a new conquest more eagerly. Innocent was establishing the papal authority over far frontiers. He had gathered the bishops of Iceland

into his fold, and now his legate, the cardinal Pelagius, was sent to Constantinople to force the submission of the Greek clergy. As in the days of the Caesars, the East was united again to the West.

By sheer will power and astute diplomacy, Innocent held imperial power almost within his grasp. "We are established," he said, "by God above peoples and realms."

His *Curia*, his privy council, wrestled under his guidance with the problems of consolidating the new realms. Kings visited Rome as vassals. One such visitor, the monarch of Aragon, swore allegiance in the basilica of St. Peter, placing his scepter and diadem on the marble altar over the tomb:

"I confess with my heart and with my mouth that the pontiff of Rome, successor to St. Peter, acts in the place of Him who governs the realms of the earth, and who can confer the realms upon whomsoever seemeth good to Him.

"I, Peter, by the grace of God, king of Aragon, count of Barcelona, and lord of Montpellier . . . offer my kingdom to thee, admirable father and lord, sovereign pontiff Innocent and . . . through thee to the most sacred Church of Rome. And I make my kingdom tributary to Rome at two hundred and fifty pieces of gold, to be paid by my treasurer every year to the Apostolic See of Rome."

And the more powerful princes felt Innocent's hand. When Philip-Augustus of France seized Normandy and the French lands of the English king, Innocent cast the weight of his influence with the weak John. But when John interfered with Church property, the papal sword gleamed at once—England was laid under interdict in 1208, and the king himself excommunicated the following year. In the end John became the vassal of the pope at a tribute of one thousand pounds a year. This roused the barons of England against their vacillating monarch, and they forced the Magna Carta upon John.

In the German realm, where Philip of Swabia and Otto of Brunswick waged their long feud, Innocent followed a different policy, supporting the weaker of the twain until the murder of Philip left Otto alone in the field and the powerful German marched down to the Tiber to be crowned—where-

upon Innocent excommunicated him. With the exception of the astute Philip-Augustus and the dour Otto, the kings of Christendom were now tributary to the See of Rome.

And now, four years after the capture of Constantinople, there came a change in Innocent's conception of the crusades.

At first he had thrown himself into the undertaking without hesitation—Jerusalem must be redeemed. The popular cry was still insistent for the liberation of the Holy Land. But in the last few years the great pope had found that the crusaders served his own more immediate needs. He had allowed Walter of Brienne with a following of French knights to aid him with their swords in Italy; he had kept the princes of Hungary back from the crusade, to act as a check on Philip of Swabia, and, without his planning it, Baldwin and the Venetians had won Constantinople for him.

At the same time enormous prestige had surrounded the papacy, from its leadership in the crusading movement. Money flowed in continuously, and no accounting was asked of it; the military orders of the Hospital and Temple thrived upon the impetus of the war—and they were vassals of the pope. Moreover, the masses of crusaders taking their vows to serve the Church had put themselves beyond the authority of their feudal lords, the princes of Europe. So the interest of the papacy was served by increasing the numbers and the privileges accorded to the crusaders, and the authority of the kings was weakened accordingly.

In these years the papal officials blossomed forth in true worldly splendor, and Innocent's court became almost imperial in its ceremonial and dignity.

Innocent may have dreaded disaster if a great movement toward Jerusalem should fail; but almost beyond doubt, he saw where his utmost advantage lay and seized upon it. He kept the crusaders at home and used them for the needs of the papacy. He granted them the same privileges that had been accorded the crusaders faring to Jerusalem. And his first blow was against the heretics.

In the south of France men lived pleasantly. They had their orchards and fertile fields, and a warm sun above them.

Outside the path of the worst feudal wars, and sheltered by the bulwark of the Pyrenees, they kept to their homes contentedly enough. In their halls the troubadours sang, and assembled courts of love around the fairest of the ladies.

They were Provençals and Gascons, with a deal of Moorish blood in them, and they had learned much from the Moslems. From their ancestors they had inherited a vague belief in good and evil as the only two vital forces existing upon the earth and affecting them.

Not all of them believed this, but the groups who did were slowly forming a religion of their own. In their thoughts they went back to the beginning of things, when Evangelists had walked the earth, and the great edifice of the Church had not been built. Undoubtedly they had listened to the Arabic philosophers.

They were known as Cathars—*the pure*. Like the first hermits of Asia, they sought cleanliness from the lusts of the body, living like ascetics, some of them refusing to eat meat, or to touch women. Their real belief remains shadowy and unknowable, because the Cathars and their teachings were all destroyed, and the traces they left were obscured by their oppressors.

A kindred sect, around Montpellier, was aroused against the luxury-loving and worldly clergy of the Roman Church. They denied the very foundations upon which the medieval Church had been built—the sacraments and the cult of saints. Moreover, they preached their faith.

Some of their seigneurs became converts to the new belief —the count of Foix, the viscount of Béarn, and finally Raymond VI, count of Toulouse, descendant of the Raymond who had been one of the leaders of the first crusade. Through the drowsy squares of the villages and the halls of the nobility the new faith spread.

In the eyes of the prelates of the Church, unbelief was criminal, and open heresy—denial of the doctrines of the Church—was the uttermost sin. A heretic became a rebel. Better that he should be punished, even by torments, than that he should exist like a mad, unreasoning dog, dangerous to himself and society as a whole—so the prelates argued.

But the first measures taken against the Cathars were lenient. A bishop and a monk, sent to investigate the contamination in the southland, saw too clearly the failings of the orthodox clergy there and concluded that this was a case for an antidote rather than a purge. Stripping themselves of worldly goods, they went barefoot among the people to show by their example that the servants of the Church were capable of the sacrifices of the Cathars. The monk, zealous and untiring, became known throughout Christendom thereafter as St. Dominic.

What effect their labors had upon the Cathars is not clear; but they antagonized the regular clergy who saw in their sacrifices an attempt to discredit themselves. As a remedy the higher prelates asked for more than a purge; they cried for an operation that should sever the cancer of heresy. It was better, they said, to burn away the cancer than to allow the whole body to become affected. One of them, in the year 1206, demanded of the papal legate that he excommunicate Raymond of Toulouse, and the following year this was done. Thereupon a hot-headed esquire of the count assassinated the legate of Rome. Word of the murder was carried to Innocent.

When the pope learned that his legate had been killed, he put his hand to his throat and in his mind he called upon the good Saint Peter. And when he had finished his prayer, he put out the flame of the candle beside him. At that moment the abbot of the Citeaux was near him, with master Milon and a dozen cardinals. They sat in a circle, and in that circle was taken the resolution by which so many men lost their lives and so many women were stripped of their garments.

Innocent called for a crusade against the heretics. They had rebelled against the authority of the Church, they should be suppressed by the soldiery of the Church. Indulgence from sin was offered those who volunteered, and even the merchants and money lenders of the North hastened to donate funds—for which they were richly repaid with cloth and wine and grain gathered from the plundered fields of the South. The crusaders were the French neighbors of the

Languedoc, the affected region. They wore bands of cloth-of-silver about their chests, embroidered with gold crosses, and they embarked upon the enterprise as if it were a huge border raid, with unlimited liberty to plunder, and ecclesiastical sanction for their efforts.

In vain Raymond of Toulouse protested that he had had no hand in the murder. The army of invasion was formed under such redoubtable and merciless spirits as Simon of Montfort, and it moved south with bands of clerics who sang *Veni Creator*. It made no distinction between Cathars and others.

At Bezières, it stormed the town, and in the Church of the Madeleine, where women and children had taken refuge, seven thousand were slain. It divided, quartering over the countryside, at times fighting actual battles against the desperate knights of the South, and at times devastating everything with sword and fire. Captured knights were crucified on the olive trees, or dragged at horses' tails. The path of the army became marked by pyres of human bodies, smoking and blackened heaps, and wells were choked by corpses.

Under the clashing of swords and the pounding of hoofs the gay songs of the troubadours and the chanting of the poets were stifled into silence.

Peter, king of Aragon, took the field against De Montfort's crusaders, with the lords of Languedoc, but he was defeated and routed and slain. This was in 1213—the war had lasted for four years, and the ravaging continued long afterward.

Meanwhile Innocent had sanctioned two other enterprises as crusades. In the far northeast the Teutonic Knights were sent among the pagan Prussians to convert them sword in hand.[1] And in Spain itself knights were summoned to a crusade against the remaining Moslems from which they emerged victorious after driving the men of Islam south to the Granada region by the sea.

And to do away with the troublesome John Lackland in England, the pope prepared for a crusade against the English

[1]This enterprise caused the Teutonic order to withdraw its headquarters from Palestine to eastern Europe, and the order took little part in events in the Holy Land thereafter except to support its emperor Frederick II.

—a move that Philip-Augustus embraced with eagerness. He had taken no part in the ravaging of Languedoc, but he welcomed an excuse for the invasion of England.

From the years 1206 to 1213 Innocent availed himself of the crusade-power to further his own policy from Constantinople to Granada. For the first time, in the south of France, he had drawn the papal sword to exterminate heretics. But it was not to be the last time. For more than five bloodstained centuries other popes and monarchs would follow his example.

So, for the first time, crusades were turned, by Innocent's will, against Europeans at home. The crusade-power had been harnessed to papal ambition.

XXXVII

INNOCENT'S CALL TO ARMS

In these years Innocent had surrounded the Church of Rome with terror. In such a short space of time he had wrought miracles within the churches as well.[1] No man of his century revealed such unbounded ambition or appalling will power. But he had not been able to put his own house in order. At his doorstep the unruly mobs of Rome still carried on their feuds, the Orsini pausing now and then to gather together against the pope who had in him the blood of the antagonistic Conti. They fortified themselves anew in their castles, making the streets a battleground when it pleased them to do so, and when the pope built a tower of his own, they forced him to flee the city.

And north of the city the Lombard communes—the sturdily independent town-republics—formed a bulwark against

[1]With the internal changes created by Innocent, we are not concerned. He undertook administrative work that was fairly miraculous for that age, and the transactions of his councils affected history for generations. In his time *transubstantiation* was first pronounced, and trial by ordeal forbidden. The genius of this great pope was many-sided, and the wisest of the historians do not find it easy to strike the total of his achievements, or his motives. We are concerned here only with his acts affecting the crusades.

the growing *imperium* of the papacy. Like the later Caesars of elder Rome, Innocent advanced his frontiers but could not be master in his imperial city.

He had to face as well a silent rebellion in the Church itself. The growing worldliness of his prelates had estranged more ardent and youthful spirits. Monks began to appear in the countryside without the sanction of their superiors. Barefoot, and clad in ragged habits, they begged their way and gave their strength to the harsh, hard work of relieving common suffering. They were high spirited, ready to chant a psalm or wield a manure fork, or walk with the vagabonds of the roads. They slept in ditches or haystacks and cared not a jot for an idle thing like dignity. One of their leaders was the man of Assisi, who laughed with the children and tended lepers and lived in reality with the birds and the beasts. He had not been dead two years before they called him St. Francis.

His fellow wanderers were known as Franciscans, or sometimes as gray friars. The people who were served by them liked them better than the clerics and spoke of them as "jongleurs of Christ." The begging friars grew in numbers, and by their poverty they protested against the growing wealth of the clerics who served the churches, not the people. At this time, in the Easter season of the year 1212, the people of Christendom were amazed by a strange happening. Down from the mountains above Italy came throngs of children marching with little wooden crosses, and singing hymns in their high voices. When the good people asked them whither they were going, they answered, "To God."

They had started out among the shepherd families of the Vendôme country, and others had joined them as they marched. They were going down to the sea, to find a way to the Holy Land to aid the Seigneur Christ. They were going to recover the Holy City, and after that there would be peace.

The children did not know just how they would do that, but thousands of them were marching together of their own will. And the people who saw them believed that this was surely a miracle and a portent.

It seemed evident to the onlookers that the Lord was about to do some great and new thing through these innocent souls gathered together of their own accord. No one tried to stay their path, and they emerged from the mountains, seeking the roads to the Italian cities where, somehow, they hoped to cross the sea.

With their crosses and staves and scrips they wandered around the harbors. No path opened for them through the waters, so that they could walk dry shod to the Holy Land. They had no money and no protectors. And among them came human wolves, making profit out of their misery, following the fairer girls about.

At one city indeed ships were offered them without payment, and the masters of the ships, when the children had embarked joyfully, sailed to Moslem ports, selling the youths and girls as slaves in the markets of Kairuwan and Alexandria. Another ship went down with the children near an island of the sea.

When Innocent heard of the matter, he did not interfere, but said, "The very children shame us, because they hasten to gain the Holy Land, while we hang back."

But the children who still were left alive had lost hope. Wearily, without their crosses and songs, they drifted back from the coast. In small groups, they tried to make their way home again over the mountains, while the good people who had aided them onward toward a miracle mocked them, pointing scornful fingers at the girls who had been ravished, saying that they had been about the devil's work, instead of the Lord's.

And thus the march of the children came to its end. They had gone forth spontaneously, driven out by hardships and suffering at home, seeking not the distant city in Palestine but that other Jerusalem that lies beyond all the seas of the earth.

Innocent built a monument on the island where their ship had gone down.

Whatever he thought about the lost crusade of the children, he was ready now for the crowning achievement of his papacy. He ceased planning the European crusades, and

prepared for a great crusade to liberate Jerusalem. And this time there was no mistaking his purpose—the conquest of Jerusalem must be the vindication of his rule.

He no longer had an enemy to deal with at home—Otto having been overthrown by Philip-Augustus. He had just seen a stripling crowned sovereign of the Holy Roman Empire—Frederick of Hohenstaufen, son of Henry VI, whose mother Constance had yielded both the regency of Sicily and the youthful Frederick to the guardianship of the pope. And, of his own accord—although Innocent may have inclined him to it—Frederick took the cross in the grotto of Charlemagne at Aix-la-Chapelle, after his coronation. So Innocent believed the long strife between empire and papacy at an end, and the boy-emperor ready for the crusade.

In November, 1215, the great council assembled at the Lateran, with bishops, abbots, and priors journeying thither from the corners of Christendom. The patriarchs of Jerusalem and Constantinople were there, and all the splendor of the majestic court surrounded Innocent as he sat enthroned above the multitude. And he preached to them with all his eloquence, saying that now was the time to make the final passage and that he himself would go with them in spirit.

The new crusade was decreed for the first of June, 1217. To aid it, the clergy would contribute one twentieth of their incomes each year for three years, and the pope and cardinals one tenth. For four years the Truce of God would be proclaimed in Europe, and the Italian republics were to cease trade with the Moslems.

Innocent felt assured of victory now. But before the preparations were more than begun, he died.

Innocent had been the greatest of the medieval popes. When he assumed the tiara, the way to Jerusalem lay open, with the forces of Christendom well prepared to venture upon the road to the Sepulcher. Yet during the seventeen years of his pontificate—it would be more just to say his reign—not a single soldier from Europe landed on the Syrian coast to go to Jerusalem.

In that time the Templars on the coast and King Amalric

from Cyprus made a raid or two on their own account, nothing more. Amalric's weakness in men made him welcome a long truce with the ageing Al Adil, now sultan of Cairo. The fragments of crusaders who detached themselves from the Constantinople venture found Amalric unable to lead them to war because of this truce. Left to their own devices, they scattered—some of them actually taking opposite sides in a feudal conflict going on between the Armenian king and the prince of Antioch.

The Flemish fleet arrived in due course, and found nothing to do, although its leader managed to quarrel with Amalric in a curious way. The lord of the Flemings was a certain John de Nesle, and at the port of Marseille he had encountered one of the waifs of the Acre crusade—the fair and almost forgotten Byzantine princess who had been carried off from Cyprus by Richard of England and who had returned to France with Berengaria. De Nesle married her, and on landing at Cyprus he claimed the sovereignty of the island by virtue of this marriage with the exiled princess. The veteran lord of Outremer gazed in astonishment at the uncouth seaman from Flanders, and exclaimed, "Who is this wandering dog? Bid him begone swiftly, or he will be cast out!"

So these unhappy crusaders in search of a crusade had to find their way home again as best they could—even as the waifs of the children's march had to retrace their steps without their songs and wooden crosses.

But the Constantinople venture had another effect, quite natural and yet unexpected. When it was known along the Syrian frontier that the great Byzantine city had fallen to the French, the knights and adventurers began to turn their eyes longingly to the north. They heard that castles and whole provinces were being given away around Constantinople, and in Greece. Uncounted riches lay there, waiting to be grasped, and the pope had promised the same indulgence for crusaders to Constantinople as to the Holy Land. Hundreds of the crusaders left the Syrian coast to seek the golden rainbow hanging over the Queen City.

Meanwhile the Venetians had thrown off the mask of the crusade. Spurred on by the rivalry of Genoa and Pisa, they

were sweeping up the coasts of Greece, colonizing and fortifying Crete. Innocent might have fared better in his attempt to reconcile the Greek clergy to Latin rule, if the Venetians had not been so greedy in despoiling the Greek churches. Not content with that, the Republic of the Lagoons was making treaties with the Seljuk sultans in Asia Minor and with Al Adil in Cairo.[1]

So vastly profitable was the Asia trade becoming that the interest of the Venetians now lay in preventing crusades, which disturbed their trade. In this, they were directly opposed to the papacy, which needed the crusades. In the tug-of-war that followed, the Venetians held their own. Innocent forbade all trade with the Moslems, but when the Venetians sent an embassy to protest, he limited his ban to materials of war—iron, oakum, pitch, rope, weapons, and ships.

Innocent had changed the whole character of the crusades, by launching them against the enemies of the papacy at home. At the same time, he had so extended the temporal rule of the papacy that it leaned more and more upon the support of the crusading movement. During all his pontificate he had sounded the clarions of the holy war, in spite of the resulting slaughter. A hundred and twenty years ago, Urban II had welcomed the first crusade, for the spiritual leadership it brought him. Innocent made use of it as a means to temporal dominion. He bequeathed it to the papacy as a fixed policy. And the results of this policy, slow in making themselves felt, were as inevitable as the darkness that follows sunset.

When he died, the papacy, deprived of his brilliant leadership, had greater need than ever of the prestige of the conflict. Already Innocent's far-flung *imperium* was cracking and crumbling in places—the Armenians were throwing off

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[1]A Christian chronicler relates: "The brother of Saladin sent to the doge of Venice great gifts, and asked security and friendship, and that the Venetians do all they could to turn the Christians aside from coming into Egypt. He gave them a franchise at the port of Alexandria, and great treasure."

Al Adil's privileges granting rights of trade at Alexandria to the Venetians have recently been found in the archives of Venice.

Innocent's attempt to limit the trade of the Venetians with the Moslems was the first historical instance of contraband of war.

allegiance to Rome, the Byzantines were making head against the Latin invasion of Constantinople, and the French were still intent upon the graveyard of the Languedoc.

So Innocent's successors, whatever their own convictions might be, were committed to preaching the crusade. They dared not refrain.

In July, 1216, the cardinal Cencio Savelli, an old and peace-loving man, assumed the tiara as Innocent's successor. That same day he announced that he would carry on Innocent's plans, and sent out letters summoning the young German emperor Frederick II to the war, with the king of Jerusalem and the French emperor of Constantinople. Frederick asked for delay, saying that his own lands were too unsettled to leave, but Andrew II, king of Hungary, whose army had been held back until then by Innocent, was the first to take the cross.

Aroused by the preachers of the crusade, men thronged from all the corners of Europe—Flemings, Scandinavians, and Austrians—to join the new army of the cross. This time they felt assured they would take Jerusalem. But the road led them to a different place.

XXXVIII

THE ROAD TO CAIRO

THE path of the new crusade[1] led to Cairo, and to the great test of strength of the years 1218–1221, when the armed power of the West was locked in a clinch with the armies of the East. And for the first time in nearly forty years the crusaders held victory within their grasp.

It is best to look at this battle—for it was an almost continuous battle—as a whole, rather than at the men who fought in it or the machinations that went on behind the scenes. In this way we can see the battlefield more clearly, and the movements of each side—for strategy played its part here. The Crusade of Cairo, as it might be called, was the climax of the conflict begun by Saladin thirty-six years before. It was the ending of an old phase, and the forerunner of a new. As Innocent's rule had foreshadowed a change in the character of the crusades, this battle of Cairo marked a change in the military conflict between Moslem and Christian.

[1]The first Egyptian crusade, often called the fifth. The great Acre crusade of 1189–1192 is commonly called the third crusade, and the Constantinople venture of 1200–1204 the fourth.

Fittingly enough, Al Adil, who had been Saladin's chief aid years before, was now the leader of the Moslem side. Al Adil, more than seventy years of age, had lost none of his cunning. He could still mount a horse and ride with his mamluks. It was the irony of fate that this man who had always craved peace should end his days in the stress of battle, with tidings of calamity ringing in his ears.

The scene. Cairo lay a little more than a hundred miles from the sea. Just below Cairo the wide Nile branched out into a dozen channels which extended like the sticks of a fan to the sea. One of the largest channels lay on the extreme west and ended in the port of Alexandria, while the largest eastern channel led to the port of Damietta. In this great triangle between the arms of the Nile, known as the delta of the Nile, the land lay flat and low and immensely fertile. Irrigation cross-ditches cut it up into a checkerboard of fields covered with crops. Every corner of this rich delta was filled with peasants at work, with gray buffaloes and horses. Boats of all kinds passed along the channels, their high lateen yards towering over the flat roofs of the mud-walled villages. When the Nile rose, the mud dikes on either side the canals were strengthened to prevent the flooding of the land. Along the tops of these dikes ran paths and roads over which moved the two-wheeled carts of the natives. These dikes and these roads were to prove important to the crusaders.

Damietta was thought by the Moslems to be impregnable, because it was surrounded by a double wall of brick rising from a deep moat, and because the back of the city, toward the east, was guarded by a wide, shallow lake, while the front rested upon the bank of the Nile. Opposite the city a huge stone tower stood in the middle of the river, with chains running from it to either bank. This Tower of the Chain barred enemy ships from ascending the river.

The Moslem strength. A garrison of some twenty thousand held Damietta, while the sultan at Cairo could assemble an equal number of men in a few weeks. Al Adil had his standing army of mamluks, veteran cavalry always under arms. Given a month or two, he could count upon the Damascus army, and at times upon the Turks of northern Syria. There were

also the usual Arab clans and Sudanis, useful in victory but worthless in defeat, and only lightly armed. So, in a month's time, he might assemble fifty thousand cavalry and a cloud of irregulars.

The prelude of 1217. Instead of striking direct at Cairo, the first crusaders to reach Acre made forays into the Holy Land, gleaning harvests and moving toward Sidon on the coast and the Galilee region. They were not strong enough to risk battle with Al Adil's army when it came up, and they retired to spend the winter at Acre and on the island of Cyprus that now served as the granary for the crusades.

The Christian strength. By May, 1218, the first wave of the crusaders had reached the scene, some thirty thousand in all. In quality they were excellent—Hungarians, and giant Scandinavians, Austrian ax wielders, and steady Hollanders. These were nearly all infantry, but by now the infantry was well protected by armor and accustomed to discipline. It had more crossbows than in the Acre crusade and was capable of standing against the charges of the Moslems. Moreover, it had new and more powerful siege engines. To these newcomers were joined the veteran contingents of Templars and Hospitalers, and the knights of Syria and Cyprus under the king of Jerusalem. These, although few in number, were mounted and well armed and accustomed to facing Moslem tactics. The fleets serving as transports were Genoese with some Pisan galleys—the crews adept at sea warfare.

The plan. The leaders of the crusaders intended to land on the delta of the Nile and storm Damietta, which was within two or three days' sail of either Cyprus or Acre. With the port of Damietta in their hands they meant to wait for further contingents from Europe and then advance up that branch of the Nile—the fleet and the army moving together —to Cairo. If they could take this city, they felt that they could hold it because the fleet would control the river. Even if they did not manage to seize all the delta, they could destroy Cairo, the citadel of Moslem power in the Near East, and retire to Damietta.

The leaders. The duke of Austria, the Hungarian counts, and the masters of the military orders placed themselves

under the command of John of Brienne, king of Jerusalem. He was the son of the Brienne who died at Acre, and the brother of Walter who had been held back in Italy to serve Innocent. Upon his accession to the throne of Godfrey and Baldwin there hangs a tale.

At the death of Amalric of Jerusalem and Cyprus there had been no male heir to the crown of Jerusalem, and the high court of the barons had decided that Marie of Montserrat should be the heiress of the kingdom. But who was to be her husband? The barons appealed to Philip-Augustus of France to name one of his nobles to become king of Jerusalem. They expected Philip to choose such a man as the count of Champagne. Instead, Philip named an obscure knight, John of Brienne, who lacked both wealth and rank, and who was not even young.

Brienne considered the matter, and borrowed 40,000 crowns from the pope, on security of his lands, and a similar amount from Philip on nothing at all; he assembled a hundred knights and set sail for his future court, where the disconsolate barons attended in all ceremony his wedding to Marie.

"He was already old," a chronicler relates, "and poorly endowed, but a true man of war, and wise."

A curious figure, this obscure and plain gentleman-soldier. In him there appeared a certain obstinate determination and a clear sense of honor that men of higher birth often lacked. Whatever his failings as king, he proved himself one of the ablest soldiers who ever wore the cross.

In May, 1218, Brienne and his army debarked on the coast across the river from Damietta. They formed their camp opposite the city and sent the Genoese galleys against the Tower of the Chain that barred the channel. With Greek fire and stones from the engines, the garrison of the tower beat off the ships, disabling them.

Meanwhile Al Adil's army of cavalry moved down from Cairo and camped on the Damietta side of the river. The engineers of the crusaders went to work methodically. The great tower being too far from the shore to reach by stone casters, they built a floating fortress upon two dismantled

galleys, bound together by joists. It was really a floating castle, sheathed with copper, and with engines on the summit. A drawbridge could be lowered from an upper floor, and three hundred men could take shelter in it.

The floating castle, towed forward by small galleys, took the Moslems by surprise. They managed to prevent the lowering of the drawbridge by covering the face of the crusaders' machine with blasts of flame. But two soldiers, driving back the Moslems with thrusts of long lances, leaped from the top upon the rampart of the Tower of the Chain. One of them, a Fleming armed with an iron flail, beat a path through the Arabs to the yellow banner of the sultan and cast it down while the knights swarmed after him. The defenders dropped into the lower level of the tower, but soon had to surrender.

The tidings of the capture of the Tower of the Chain were carried to Al Adil at Cairo. The old sultan, already ill and worn out with the campaigning of the last year, was stricken by the misfortune and did not regain his strength. When he died, no one but his personal attendants and his son were informed, and Al Adil's body was embalmed and put into a closed litter while his guards were summoned and his physician announced that the sultan would journey to Damascus to recover his health. By the time his death was known, his son Al Kamil—already in active command of the cavalry at Damietta—was in possession of the palace. Even after his death, Al Adil had served the cause of Islam.

Al Kamil took the reins of authority at once. He was a skillful leader, already a man of mature years, as astute as his father had been. But some of the Ayoubite amirs conspired against him, and for a space he had to leave the camp. During this disorder the crusaders crossed the river and besieged Damietta on all sides.

Returning, Al Kamil threw a dike across the channel, above the city. The Genoese galleys broke through this barrier, but the resourceful sultan sank some of his own galleys, weighted down with stone, in the channel above the ruined dike, and this time the crusaders were fairly blocked.

In the brief winter rains Al Kamil, deprived of part of his army, could not risk battle against the invaders. And the

crusaders managed to clear another channel, around the sunken galleys, so that their ships were able to pass up the river at will and to pen the Moslems to the right bank. They also built a bridge of boats across the river at Damietta.

So the spring of 1219 found the crusaders in trenches around the beleagured city, cutting off all food and reinforcement from the Moslems within the walls. At the same time fresh forces of French and English crusaders joined the siege, bringing with them Cardinal Pelagius, the papal legate, and numbers of priests and friars, with regiments of Lombard soldiery.

Matters so far had been pretty much of a draw—while the crusaders had taken the Tower of the Chain, the city itself had held out much longer than they expected. Some of the contingents became war-weary and were on the point of withdrawing, when the sultan's fleet, that had been held up the river near Cairo, came down to try to clear the Christian galleys from the river. The Genoese had all the best of this encounter, and the Moslems retired up the river again. Meanwhile the spirit of the crusader had been heartened by the presence of the gray friar, Francis of Assisi, and his companions, and by the exhortations of Pelagius. The cardinal-legate had wielded the lash of authority before now at Constantinople, and he grasped at the reins of command here. Under his urgency attacks were made through the summer, in vain. While Pelagius dominated the council, the gentle friar of Assisi went about among the tents, sharing the tasks of the soldiers, and tending the sick.

But by autumn the Moslem garrison was in the last throes of starvation. In a storm, during the night of November fourth, the crusaders made a surprise attack. They swarmed up the ladders in silence and seized a tower. Some Templars fought their way down to a postern gate, broke it down with their axes and let in their comrades who were waiting outside the wall.

Al Kamil, who was camped not far away, could do nothing to aid the city because the flooded canals—the Nile being then at its height—prevented him from moving forward. The next day Damietta fell to the crusaders, with all the

wealth of its bazaars. Its cathedral mosque was converted into a church by the zealous Pelagius, and enthusiasm ran high among the Christians.

The Moslems, who had thought Damietta impregnable, were thoroughly disheartened. Some of them fled back to Cairo, crying that the crusaders were on the way to the city, and for a while Al Kamil and his officers could do nothing with the panic-stricken multitudes.

Pelagius urged an immediate advance on Cairo, on the heels of the retiring Moslems—an obvious move, tempting enough to a layman. It would have been a decisive move, without doubt, if the army could have been transported intact to the gates of Cairo at once. But the crusaders had suffered during the siege, and more than a hundred miles of bottom land crisscrossed by flooded ditches and canals lay between them and the city.

John of Brienne and the experienced soldiers advised first putting Damietta in condition to defend, fortifying the outer camp, resting the men, and waiting until the flood subsided, when Frederick, the German emperor, had promised to appear in Egypt. Only after a battle of wills did he gain the cardinal's consent to this, and Pelagius did not forgive him the struggle.

XXXIX

MANSURA

While they waited, the crusaders stormed the fortress of Tanis in the center of the near-by lake. But Frederick did not appear, although his departure for Egypt was announced from time to time. And the crusaders did not know that he had no intention of coming. After the summer of 1220 John and the Syrian barons withdrew for a time to Acre to attend to affairs there, leaving Pelagius in charge at Damietta.

Meanwhile two very different things had happened elsewhere. Al Kamil's brother, the sultan of Damascus, fearing that the crusaders would turn against Jerusalem after taking Damietta, demolished the walls of the Holy City, except for the Haram sanctuary and the Tower of David—so making Jerusalem an open city that could not be defended until it was walled in again.

And far in the east began an upheaval that struck terror into the heart of Islam, and turned all the eyes of the Moslems thither. For the present the crusaders knew nothing about this.

So the remainder of 1220 passed, with the crusaders extend-

ing the Damietta lines and Al Kamil rebuilding his army at Cairo. What the king of Jerusalem and the sultan might have done next is uncertain. But Pelagius took the reins into his hand.

Early in the summer of 1221 Louis, duke of Bavaria, landed on the delta with a strong force, and Herman of Salza, grand master of the Teutonic Knights, appeared with 500 swords and tidings that his lord, the emperor Frederick, would sail for Egypt immediately. Whereupon Pelagius ordered an advance upon Cairo on his own account.

Brienne and the Syrian lords heard of the decision and hastened back to the Egyptian front. They opposed the advance, until Frederick should arrive, knowing that Al Kamil now had with him the armies of Damascus, Hamah, and Baalbek—the Moslems outnumbered the Christians three to two. But the cardinal was supported by the Italian contingents and the newly arrived Germans. The march up the Damietta branch of the Nile was begun, and King John and his lords joined it, with their men. In all, the army numbered about 1,000 knights, 5,000 cavalry, and 40,000 foot.

Whereupon Al Kamil did something quite unexpected; he offered terms of peace. He had the upheaval in the east to ward against, and the last thing he wanted now was a long siege of Cairo. Moreover, the crusaders were so fortified in Damietta that it would be a tremendous task to get them out of there. So, if they would retire from Egypt and give up Damietta, he offered them their ultimate objective, Jerusalem.

With Jerusalem, he agreed to yield to them the surrounding country, with Bethlehem and Nazareth and the intervening shore as far south as Ascalon, and the Galilee region —all the conquests of Saladin from the Jordan to the sea.

The offer came after the crusaders had gained a minor success and were approaching the camp of the sultan's army at Mansura, where the Nile branched again. It took them by surprise, and the leaders debated it anxiously. They soon divided into two parties, with King John, the French seigneurs, the barons of the Syrian coast, and the

masters of the Temple and the Hospital urging acceptance of the sultan's terms.

By those terms they could restore the old kingdom of Outremer as it had been before the battle of Hattin, and the line of the Jordan and the northern mountains could easily be held. Above all, they would be masters of Jerusalem again.

Strangely, while these soldiers were eager to exchange Damietta for Jerusalem, it was a churchman who opposed them. Pelagius would not hear of it. He demanded that the terms be refused, and the march to Cairo resumed.

Why he took this stand there is no telling.[1] The Genoese faction was urgent to press the war in Egypt and to keep the port of Damietta—for to these merchants of the sea the recovery of Jerusalem meant little, while the trade of Damietta and Cairo meant much. The other Italians and the newly arrived Germans also supported Pelagius. But the cardinal seems to have been obsessed with the thought of victory in battle. He had wielded authority in Constantinople, he had driven the soldiers to the assault of Damietta, and now he had set his mind upon Cairo.

His word was final, because he was legate of the Holy See, and he spoke with the authority of the pope himself. The sultan's terms were rejected and the army moved forward again.

Unknown to the crusaders and days before its time, the Nile was also moving in flood down toward them.

Against his will, Al Kamil made ready to give battle at Mansura—The Victorious. For months he had been building galleys at Cairo and sending them down the other branch of the Nile to Alexandria, so that by now the Moslem fleet

[1]The march on Cairo would only have been justified if the crusaders had been in far greater strength than the Moslems. On the contrary, Al Kamil had the larger army, owing to the reinforcements that had just come in from the east. The Moslem chroniclers say that he had 40,000 men without the Bedawin and Sudani levies. They add that the Christians demanded more than the sultan offered at first—the citadels of Kerak and Mont Réal to be added to the Jerusalem concession—and that when the sultan granted this, they still demanded 500,000 dinars to be paid for repairing the walls of Jerusalem. But the Moslem historians naturally desire to make it appear that Al Kamil denied the Christian's request, and their testimony does not alter the fact that the crusaders did not accept the sultan's first terms.

was the stronger and, going around by sea from Alexandria to Damietta, had driven the Christian ships away from Damietta.

On the twenty-fourth of July, the crusaders' advance came to a stop. In front of them the river joined the Ashmoun branch of the Nile, so that they were moving into a triangle of land with rivers on both sides, while across the water on slightly higher ground stood the Moslem fortified camp of Mansura. All their efforts at forcing a crossing failed under the missiles from the Moslem engines, and they were beset in turn by clouds of Bedawin horse. Before long they were obliged to entrench their own camp. Meanwhile the Nile rose steadily, and the ships bringing their supplies ceased to come up the river.

This was due to Al Kamil's galleys, which had taken possession of the Damietta branch in the rear of the Christians, coming between them and Damietta. Apparently the galleys accompanying the army could do nothing with the new Moslem fleet. And with his ships in control of the waterways, Al Kamil could move his forces about at will.

The first the Christians realized of the flood was when the water appeared in their camp, ankle deep. Al Kamil then took the desperate measure of breaking down some of the river dikes, flooding the triangle in which the crusaders were camped.

Only one narrow mule path remained open in the rear of the Christians, and the sultan—by throwing a bridge of boats across the Ashmoun branch—was able to place his cavalry across this single road to Damietta. His archers raked the crusaders' tents with arrows, and King John, faced with disaster, cast his knights through the flooded region in an attack upon the Moslems. The heavy chargers bogged down in the mud, and the Moslem archers swept the men from the saddles with their arrows from the dikes.

Without food and almost without hope, the king burned his tents and, with all the army, tried to cut his way back to Damietta; but on the first day the retreat floundered in the flooded ditches, and with his men helpless in the water, he sent to the sultan to ask for terms of peace.

While his men, separated from their remaining ships, beat off the Moslem attacks, King John was escorted under truce to Al Kamil's tent, where he flung himself down, his head in his hands.

"Why grievest thou?" the sultan asked.

"I grieve," John said, "for the men out yonder."

The crusaders, although unable to move, were still holding off the triumphant Moslems, and Al Kamil had no inclination to press the attack upon desperate men—or to besiege Damietta, which was held by a strong garrison, thereafter. So he granted liberal terms, the prisoners on both sides to be returned, Damietta to be given up and evacuated, and the surviving crusaders to be allowed to depart in peace. A truce was agreed upon for eight years, or until a new monarch should come on crusade from Europe—King John, still expecting the arrival of the Emperor Frederick, did not feel that he could bind the German monarch by his surrender.

So, in the gray mud of the Nile, ended the first Egyptian crusade, in September, 1221.

The disaster had a double effect. Ever since Saladin's capture of Jerusalem, the men of Europe had gone forth to continuous war. Until now they looked forward hopefully to the recovery of the Holy City, feeling that the burden of their sins had caused defeat in the past, but that victory lay ahead of them—a conviction impressed upon them by the preachers of the Church. After Mansura, the soldiers began to lose this confidence.

On the other hand the Moslems, who had lost ground steadily, though not decisively, since Saladin's first sweep across the Holy Land, now regained confidence. Mansura taught them that they could overthrow an army of the dreaded knights. Saladin had fought against odds, but Al Kamil found himself on even terms with the crusaders. Thenceforth the Moslem power was to increase, although in a way they little suspected.

The surrender at Mansura had its interlude. A slender figure in a friar's habit, barefoot and hatless, appeared in the Moslem camp, heedless of the mocking and menaces of the

warriors. St. Francis, the apostle of poverty and gentleness, made an appeal to the sultan in his seat of war and luxury. To Al Kamil, little understanding, it seemed to be an act of madness, but he saw that this first missionary of peace suffered no harm.

Al Kamil had broken and driven back a general crusade, but he still had to deal with Frederick of Hohenstaufen.

PART IV

When kaiser redbeard *took the cross and rode to the east, he came not home again. He passed from the sight of the men of the marks, and no one could say where his grave was dug. But the dwarfs of the forests knew, the trolls of the forests knew, and the old men and minnesingers said, "In the abyss of Kyfhauser he slumbers. Ay, the Redbeard sleeps with his paladins, until the trumpets of Armageddon shall sound, when he will ride again with his host—he will ride again."*

And the years passed, and the generations of men, and Armageddon came. But the Redbeard slept with his paladins, and one knows where his grave is dug.

XL

THE CHILD OF SICILY

The court of Palermo had tasted of the lotus. It lay apart from the roads of the world and the rumbling of wars. Between the hills and the tranquil blue sea, it thrived and invented pleasures of its own.

To these sun-warmed hills of Sicily had come Norman adventurers and German knights. They were glad to be free of the thralldom of snow and ice, and they built their castles on the heights overlooking vineyards and orchards and the beaches filled with fishing craft and drying nets. They need no longer prison themselves in during the winter, while cattle grew lean in dark byres, and woodcutters shambled through the dark forests under a leaden sky.

Instead they could ride out to the hawking at will, or hold tournaments of arms in the palace grounds, sheltered by rows of dark ilex and hibiscus bushes with dull red blossoms. They had discarded the leather jerkins and wool tunics of the North, and they clothed their limbs in silk and linen surcoats embroidered with new colors. Instead of being pent in the weaving rooms, the women went about with the men, and sat by them in the banquets of the castle halls. The nobles themselves no longer kept tally of cattle, and

hides and mead stored up, or the farming of the summer fields. Here they had native peasants to labor with the harvests, and Arab treasurers to keep faithful account of monies.

Palermo had grown fine and sightly since the Normans came. Stone cloisters had been built around flowering gardens where the monks took their ease during the hot afternoons. But fairest of all was the new cathedral of bright brown stone, with twin belfries—towers that soared against the drifting white clouds, above the dust and the clamor of the streets. Each year they added some chapel or arched portal to the edifice, or a new bit of mosaic that shone like glass upon a ground of gold. They had learned to love colors, these monks who had seen the finer work of the Byzantine and Arab artisans. With brush and gold-leaf they gilded carefully the hair and the haloes of the figures of the saints.

They had done away with the gray, cold walls—for the walls of the cathedral were pierced with lofty pointed windows of real glass, in small pieces, leaded together. And upon these pieces of glass were painted actual scenes from the days of the Seigneur Jesus, with lilies growing in the fields. When the sun struck fair upon these windows, the blessed figures glowed with a lifelike color, and this was truly a marvel.

True, in the chapel of the palace, there were greater wonders—birds and beasts carved out of white marble, supporting the pulpit and the heads of the columns. And skilled Arabs had carved in the wood of the ceiling such crystalline designs that it no longer seemed to be wood at all. But the folk of the city visited the cathedral daily for their needs—carrying sick children or holy pictures to be blessed. Or, perhaps, being weary, they went in to hear the long chanting of the choir.

And from the cathedral went out at Easter-tide the old processional of the Crucifix, carried upon the shoulders of the willing peasants, with lilies and poppies piled around the feet of the well-known figures. They even had, borne upon a platter for all to see, the knife with which the good Peter sliced an ear from one of the persecutors of the Lord. And by the knife lay the actual ear.

The men of the cloisters did more than march in the processions. Some of them had studied Arab texts and others had read the profane writings of the pagans, Virgil and Horace. To be sure, they did not copy such writings in their book of hours, but they talked about them.

The noble lords were not apace with the new learning of the scholastics, for Latin and Greek are woundy matters for the mind. Yet they had learned the art of the minstrels, and they could match one good *lai* with another. They still dreaded the spell magic might cast upon them, and in all evil they saw the hand of Satan.

In doctoring their children, however, they favored the Arab leeches who knew all the humors of the blood, rather than the black priests who relied upon holy water, or the beldames who croaked of the virtues of herbs boiled with vital parts of snakes, toads, and lice. For one thing, the Arabs' drafts were pleasanter drinking.

The gray friars and the preaching friars had not yet come to Palermo. The Sicilian lords, living apart from the bishoprics of the North, had talked much with far-faring merchants and Arab savants, and in their tournaments they made much ado about the pageantry, the decking of the lists, and the caparisoning of the horses, and the rules of courtesy that they had gleaned from Moslem chivalry. So the tournaments were delightful to the ladies, who had had little share in the bone-breaking mêlées of the North in the old days.

And it was pleasant for the knights to join their love of women with their allegiance to the Lord. Much pleasanter, now, to have women their companions in field and hall, able to cap their jests and yield a spice to the drinking. Already they had forgotten the days of the old feudal manors, when women bore children that often died, and went about, burdened with keys, from embroidery looms to the prayer closets with their images of stiff and colorless saints.

As plants thrive in a sunny sheltered garden, these men of Sicily gained warm-blooded vitality and sharpened, eager minds that sought for new thoughts. It was whispered in Rome that they were in a fair way to become a second court of Toulouse, filled with the heretics of Languedoc. . . .

And the court found its very embodiment in the youth who was its sovereign, Frederick Hohenstaufen, the son of Henry VI and Constance of Sicily, but an orphan from the age of three years. In appearance he was all Norman, stocky and strong, with a keen, ugly face and intolerant eyes set too close together, and a pride that was as instinctive as his mordant humor. Was he not the heir of the Hohenstaufen, descendant of Frederick Redbeard, who had been a Teutonic Hannibal, and who had said, "By God's grace, I am emperor of Rome"?

Not that Frederick troubled his head about matters of empire. He left all that to the Church, for Innocent had been his tutor and the present pope his preceptor, and between them they were administering Sicily for him. He was quite willing to sign concessions to his friends in Rome—while he had other things to occupy him.

He loved the chase, and the training of falcons, and the excitement of the tournaments. And the young prince had the ability to do everything well. His quick mind seized upon a new problem and mastered it—whether it was the handling of a lance, or the wheedling of a fair woman. In this last Frederick found no difficulty, only a delight that changed in a few years to amusement. He learned to play with his passions, seeking some fresh sensation that he had missed.

His was a philosophic mind. A brilliant conversationalist, and a stubborn arguer, he found food for interest in the debates of his prelates with the Arabs and Greeks of the court. Straightway, his thoughts overleaped such dogmatic problems, and played with stranger concepts. Something in him was akin to the Justinian of other ages who had never been content, even with pagan dreams.

Frederick once said that he would only believe what could be demonstrated before him. But, in reality, he believed whatever appealed to his fancy. His philosophy never overcame his curiosity. And, for better or worse, Frederick was launched upon a world that, in spite of the new learning of the scholastics, was bound in all things by the rigid dogma of the Church.

While Innocent lived, Frederick remained on most affable terms with Rome. If he was not devout, he was indifferent, while he had his falcons and the fair Greek girls.

And then, with a sudden flash of decision, he rode north almost unattended, to claim the German throne that his father had held. On the way he presented himself before Innocent and a bargain was confirmed between them. The Lateran would support his candidacy, upon two conditions—that Frederick take the crusader's cross, and that never under any conditions should the crowns of Sicily and Germany be united in one person. No matter how friendly the emperor, Rome would not allow him to hold, as Henry had tried to hold, the empire on the north and the kingdom on the south. Rome itself held the regency of Sicily and southern Italy—now known as the Two Sicilies.

Frederick pledged himself to this in all sincerity. He had grown up, amid neglect and conspiracy, as the ward of the Church, and all that was chivalrous in him drew him toward the crusade. It is significant of Innocent's knowledge of men that he had misgivings after his meeting with Frederick. And the bargain proved disastrous to the papacy.

This happened in 1215.

For a while the disorders in the German lands occupied all Frederick's attention, and he dealt deftly with the problems here—although at first he could hardly speak German. The lion cub was gaining both strength and cunning. And he became aware of many things, among them that the papal *Curia* was setting aside German rights in Italy. This drew his eyes to the South—for the greatest of the Hohenstaufen was not the man to let others tread upon his privileges. Moreover, he was never at ease in the somber burgs of the North, and his love of Sicily never waned.

The papal court began to think that it had lost a good friend to make a bad neighbor. And the robed men of Rome decided that Frederick must carry out his vow to go on crusade. But Frederick would not be drawn out of his new stronghold, and on one pretense or another, he put off his

departure—finally requesting that before he went he should be crowned in public at Rome, and this was done with all ceremony.

Then the news of the failure of the Egyptian crusade and the loss of Damietta reached Rome. It was decided to call a conference of the various leaders to discuss the next crusade, and to this assemblage at Ferentino in the year 1223 the pope himself came, and Frederick, with Herman of Salza, grand master of the Teutonic Order recently escaped from Egypt. Thither also journeyed the grand masters of the Temple and Hospital, with John, King of Jerusalem, and other princes.

It was the stalwart Herman of Salza—and no one knows who inspired him to do so—who rose and suggested that Frederick marry Yolande, the young daughter of John, and sole heiress to the kingdom of Jerusalem.

This naturally pleased John, the elderly gentleman-adventurer, who had hardly dreamed of having a Hohenstaufen for son-in-law. The pope, Honorius, assented, seeing in this marriage a means of interesting Frederick in the Holy Land. And Frederick himself agreed readily, seeing a new gateway of conquest open to the East—the very dream of his father.

The matter was discussed by everyone save Yolande, who was only eleven years of age. At least a year must pass before she would be able to marry. And Herman of Salza agreed that, of course, John would continue to hold the kingship of Jerusalem so long as he lived. On his part, Frederick, intrigued by the new project, swore that he would sail upon his crusade in 1225.

But when the time of the wedding drew near, Frederick did not sail to claim his bride in the Holy Land. Yolande must needs come to the cathedral of Brindisi instead, with her small entourage, and her bridal chests, and her girlish pride in this great dignity, and her unspoken fears. For she was only thirteen and the scion of the Hohenstaufen had become the most exalted monarch of Christendom.

No chronicler relates her story. She knelt beside the German lord, her master, in all the splendor of the imperial

court. She went forth into oblivion. Not a week had passed before John found his daughter unattended and weeping in the Brindisi castle. What she endured at Frederick's hand was never known. The dry pen of history relates that she died in giving birth to her first child, Conrad.

Nor was her father happy in the marriage, because the following day Frederick made sudden demand upon him to yield the scepter of his kingdom, saying that Yolande by her lineage was rightful queen of Jerusalem. Almost by force the scepter was taken from the old adventurer—and in the eyes of the men of that time, authority passed beyond remedy from the monarch who surrendered his regalia.

John protested, reminding Frederick of his pledge at Ferentino that the kingship should remain with him until his death. Frederick retorted that there had been no written treaty. In the emperor's mind there was no question of broken faith. John of Brienne was a man of obscure birth, to be thrust aside from the path of majesty.

He could not thus lightly rid himself of the pledge to go on crusade. Instead he swore anew, placing his hands between the hands of the cardinal Pelagius, that he would sail, under pain of excommunication, in two years with a fleet and a strong army. But in those two years new projects took shape in his mind and he determined to keep Sicily. The old life at Palermo brought back all his love for the Southland. True, he had promised Innocent to give up Sicily when he took the German throne. It would be a delicate matter to reclaim the South—and a pretty bit of intrigue always fascinated him.

The Lateran was well aware of the danger in this—the two grindstones of the North and South closing upon Rome under a single powerful hand. The aged and gentle Honorius died, and was succeeded by an equally aged but far more dominant soul, Gregory IX. The first act of the new pope was to send letters to Frederick demanding that he make good his vow and sail.

So at last, in September, 1228, Frederick's malingering came to an end and he embarked with his men for the East. In the hot summer on the Brindisi coast, sickness had taken

toll of the army and increased to such an extent aboard the ships that Frederick put back to Otranto. There, at the end of September, he was astonished to hear that Gregory had pronounced him excommunicate because he had turned back, and had launched upon him the great curse of the Church, condemning him to solitude and freeing his subjects from allegiance to him.

Undoubtedly Frederick was not prepared for this. Nor was he minded to yield to the pope. And, when everyone looked for him to hasten back to Germany to rally his forces, he sailed instead to Jerusalem.

It must have stirred the dark humor in him, to set out at last as a crusader, under excommunication.

XLI

FREDERICK'S VOYAGE

The men who sailed with Frederick to the East—he had left the bulk of his army in Sicily—were more troubled by the excommunication than their master. Some of the priests, fearful of what might befall, whispered that the emperor had held intercourse with strange powers, and that at heart he was no better than a pagan. Others denied this, saying that he had become emperor by God's will, and that the Church of Rome had no right to lay such a ban upon the anointed of God.

Old soldiers recalled the past, telling how one of Frederick's ancestors had knelt in the snow in his shirt for days before the closed door of the pope, to do penance for his sins, and how Barbarossa had prostrated himself, to let the pope put foot upon his neck. It was ill, they muttered, to go against the Church; but what was done, was done.

It would be mended, the more ardent spirits pointed out, if their master redeemed the tomb of the Lord from the infidels. That would be a penance!

But how could one accursed by the holy Father hope to gain a victory where even the great cardinal Pelagius had failed? And what fate would befall the army that he led?

To go against the infidel was right enough—the clear duty of Christian folk. But to draw sword against the powers of evil, when the holy Father had cursed their leader, that was a fearful thing. Besides, they had only half an army.

So the German liegemen talked among themselves, while the ships crossed the blue Aegean and drew near the low shore of Cyprus. The few foreign crusaders had dropped away from Frederick, but the Teutonic Knights held to his side and the bulk of the small army followed its lords obediently, albeit with misgivings. When they landed on the sands of Limassol, the Templars held aloof in the neighboring castle of Colossi, and the nobles of Cyprus greeted the emperor with constraint, although the duty of hospitality lay upon them, to welcome him.

Frederick, however, was in high spirits. He bade his hosts prepare a banquet, and at table he talked with them affably, even while his liegemen came and ranged themselves about the hall. To the veteran lord John of Ibelin, who was acting as governor of the island, he turned suddenly.

"Messire John," he said, "I have two requests to lay before you. If you will accord me them graciously you will do well for yourself and will prove that you are, as men say, a wise man."

Ibelin, who was also lord of Beirut, responded gravely: "Sire, all that lies in the duty of a man of honor, I will do, certainly."

Frederick glanced about the table and smiled. "The first thing that I ask is the castle of Beirut, which is within the kingdom of my son Conrad. The second is that you render me account of the revenues of the Crown of Cyprus for the ten years since the death of King Hugh; for to me belong the fruits of the domain, after the laws and right of the German Empire."

Hearing these words, some at the table fell amazed, and others looked about them uneasily. For Frederick had demanded no less than that the rich island and the fair port of Beirut be yielded into his hand. He meant, it was clear, to claim all the possessions of the Crown in the region of the Holy Land, by virtue of Yolande's title and the homage that

had been done to his father. Yet at the very outset he found before him a man who would not submit to blandishment, or to a show of force.

"Sire," said John d'Ibelin, when he had considered his response, "as to the city of Beirut, it is mine by right as I took it from the Saracens." He stood up before his distinguished guest. "As for the revenues of Cyprus, I will submit them to the high court of the barons; and now do I ask for trial and judgment upon this matter that you have brought up between us."

And, storm and laugh and threaten as he would, Frederick could not shake the decision of the soldier. He had hoped to sweep away opposition, and he was not minded to submit his claim to court. But he left his bailiffs in Cyprus when he crossed to the Holy Land, and he had not relinquished his plan of drawing all the Near East into his empire.

He had need just then of all his nimble wit. Many Syrian barons had taken warning from the case of Ibelin, and would not join him. The Hospitalers kept to their castles. Frederick had no more than thirty-five hundred horse and ten thousand foot with him, and the voyage had emptied his treasury. Even while he landed with all his court at Acre, he borrowed 40,000 pieces from Syrian nobles.

With such a force he could not hope to fight his way to Jerusalem, and he turned instead to diplomacy, knowing that the Moslems dreaded his coming. He had taken pains to notify Al Kamil at Cairo of his approach, and to salute the sultan in most friendly manner. Now he wrote again:

"At the time of the siege of Damietta, you offered to grant us all Palestine. Now, surely, you can not offer me less than you promised the other Franks. If I had thought you would not make this concession, I would not have come. It is not to your interest to disappoint me."

This was really brilliant effrontery, and Al Kamil did not know what to make of it. He *had* agreed to treat with Frederick, but had not mentioned Jerusalem. The great German emperors had always been held in awe by the Moslem princes, who looked on them as the true lords of Christendom. Al Kamil did not wish to give up Palestine, yet he wished even

less for war with Frederick. So he sent an envoy to flatter the exalted invader.

And Frederick flattered the envoy, talking to him as only the emperor could. He hinted at his liking for the Moslem customs and religion—mentioned his Arab subjects in Sicily—debated the philosophy of Averroes—and promised to prevent any other crusade being launched against Al Kamil.

He moved down to Jaffa, and fortified it, to be nearer the negotiations, and gave the Moslems no time to ponder the matter. Banquet followed banquet and his German barons hunted over the foothills toward Jerusalem.

"I am thy friend," he wrote again to Al Kamil, "and soon wilt thou know how high I am above all the other princes of the West." Al Kamil yielded, and after his envoy brought his consent Frederick had the treaty drawn up in Arabic and French. With only a few witnesses present, he signed it, and put away his own copy. Then he bade it be announced in the camp that the Holy Land had been yielded to him.

It was years before the full terms of this unlooked-for treaty were known. In reality, Frederick had conceded a good deal, but he had traded promises for territory.

The treaty granted him all the city of Jerusalem, except the Haram region with the Dome of the Rock and the Al Aksa mosque, sacred to the Moslems. The Templars and Hospitalers could return to the Holy City but not to their castles outside it, although the neighboring villages went with the city, and Bethlehem and Nazareth also. A kind of corridor down to Acre, with the castles of Toron and Montfort, was ceded, so that the Christians could come and go to the sea.

On his part, Frederick pledged the safety of Moslem pilgrims to the Haram, and agreed to a truce for ten years. In this time he would give no aid to the Christian lords of north Syria, and he would not allow a crusade to be formed in Europe against Egypt. He also agreed not to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem.[1]

[1]The terms of this peace are not clearly known. For instance, one of the first things Frederick did at Jerusalem was to prepare openly to rebuild the walls—although the other points of his agreement with the Moslems he tried to keep.

It is said also that Laodicea and Mount Tabor were yielded up by Kamil.

After the peace the crusaders held all the shore from Antioch to Ascalon, and

For a man harassed by the papal power, and with only the nucleus of an army, this was a brilliant piece of diplomacy, and Frederick made more effort to keep his pledges to the Moslems than he had done with the Christians. But it was a halfway measure, leaving Jerusalem divided between Moslem and Christian, and defenseless. It roused instant protest from the Templars and Hospitalers, who had not been consulted, although they were bound by the terms of the truce.

And the Moslems railed against Al Kamil who had given away Al Kuds, The Holy, for some promises from the Franks. In vain the sultan said to them, "I have yielded nothing to the Franks but churches and houses in ruins, while the mosque remains as it is, and all the ritual of Islam will be observed there, as before."

But kadis and readers who were forced to leave the abandoned places journeyed to Cairo with their Korans and prayer rugs and posted themselves outside the sultan's gate, to wail and to scold him when he appeared.

The common folk among the Christians who had hoped for the recapture of the Holy Land felt that the treaty was ominous of evil to come, and they spoke of it among themselves as "the bad peace."

Meanwhile, in the beginning of Lent of this year 1229, the emperor made ready to enter Jerusalem.

It was to be his triumph in the Holy Land, and no doubt he bethought him of the triumphs of the Caesars of elder Rome. He rode gayly through the twisting valleys where Coeur de Lion had struggled, and at his heels came a glittering cortège of nobles. Although the sun was mild, and the hillsides green after the rains, a shadow lay over the German monarch and his men.

From Rome, the pope's legates had followed his journey, warning the people against this antagonist of the Church. The sacraments could not be administered to Frederick, nor would any bishop bless his undertaking. Wherever he halted

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many places in the foothills—the Hospitalers had been fortifying their lands in middle Syria—but the Moslems kept the castles in the hills, and the line of the Jordan, so the crusaders in Jerusalem were always open to attack.

for the night, the papal envoy came and laid the interdict of the Church upon the spot. No holy offices could be held where Frederick had set his foot.

Without heeding, the emperor passed through the dismantled gate of Jerusalem, and took up his quarters in a palace abandoned by the Moslems. A strange throng stood in the alleys to stare at him—bearded Greek priests and swarthy Maronites, Jews in their shubas and palmers leaning upon their staffs. Beside them crowded Moslem kadis, and silent men wearing the white turbans of the *hadj*. Except for these, Jerusalem lay deserted. No bells tolled joyfully and no choir sang as Frederick dismounted at the courtyard of the Sepulcher, looking up at the leaning belfry and the arched portals marred by weather and neglect.

No one advanced to greet him, so that when his courtiers had assembled, the emperor had to lead the way into the dark church and to the white marble tomb under the cracked dome, where the Greek priests followed, anxious and uncertain, like mothers who watch some stranger approach their child.

The Germans all held tapers in their hands, and when they had knelt before the closed tomb, Frederick rose and went to the altar opposite. On the altar a gold crown had been placed, and since there was no bishop to do the office for him, Frederick crowned himself. Lifting the gold circlet with his own hand, he placed it on his head.

"In the name of the holy Trinity . . . I, Frederick the Second, by divine mercy emperor of the Romans, for ever Augustus, and king of Sicily, announce that I am henceforth king of Jerusalem. . . ."

He took his seat upon the raised chair, and a stalwart figure in armor uprose, bearing his helmet upon his arm. It was Herman of Salza, and he spoke to the listening knights and priests first in German, then in French:

"Seigneurs, my lord the emperor hath made sacrifice to journey hither, and now he hath redeemed for us this holy city and this blessed Sepulcher. My lord the emperor is ready to devote his strength and his revenues to maintain and guard what he hath won for us . . . and on your part,

you must e'en give what you can from your revenues. . . ."

Leaving the church, Frederick made his way to the palace, and held open court there. A banquet was prepared, and he urged the Moslem amirs to attend, taking great satisfaction in talking with them. This day, he told them, was the beginning of peace between Moslem and Christian, and he trusted in the Holy Land their friendship would be as lasting as in Sicily.

When the feasting was at an end, Frederick led the way to the dismantled city wall, and with the Moslems at his side, began with his own hand the trench that was to hold the foundation of a new wall. This done, he confessed to a desire to visit the sanctuaries of the Moslems. Whereupon the kadi, sent by Al Kamil to attend upon the distinguished guest, conducted him past the Via Dolorosa to the great wall of the temple enclosure over which towered the gilt dome of the Rock.

Frederick admired this much, and exclaimed over the beauty of the wide Al Aksa portico where the delicate columns erected by the first crusaders still stood in place. He even climbed upon a marble *minbar* beside the fountain, and as he did so his quick eye caught sight of a Christian priest who had followed his knights and was now hastening toward the entrance of the mosque that had once held the chapel of the Templars. In his hand the priest carried the Scriptures.

Frederick stormed at him angrily. "Knowest not that here even we are only the vassals of the sultan Al Kamil? Not one of you is to pass the limits fixed about your churches."

At sunset that evening he went to the roof of his palace to listen to the muezzin's call to prayer. When he heard nothing, he summoned the kadi to him the next day.

"Why," he asked, "did not the muezzins call the faithful to prayer from the minarets?"

The kadi had been careful to forbid the call, for fear of angering his illustrious and temperamental visitor. "Your slave forbade them," he explained, "out of respect for the emperor."

"You were wrong to do that," Frederick responded, "for

my chief purpose in coming to Jerusalem was to hear the Moslem summons to prayer and their praise to Allah during the night."

While the emperor remained in Jerusalem, the Christian patriarch would not enter; and when he left, the black form of the papal legate appeared in the Via Dolorosa, treading where Frederick had trod, with the robed priests following after. Upon the very stones, he proclaimed the interdict of the Church, and so proclaiming, he passed into the courtyard of the Sepulcher. Even hardened men-at-arms, whose souls were past all shriving, stared aghast and crossed themselves as they listened to the measured chant of the papal messenger. The words were whispered from hospice to hall, and men grew pale at the whispers.

"*Sancta Maria*—what has come upon us? He has laid the ban upon the Tomb!"

Then they feared that indeed evil would come of this—although many, traveling unhindered to Jerusalem, praised Frederick as a victor and as a very Michael in armor prevailing over the forces of Satan.

Frederick put to sea at once, because tidings had reached him that the papal forces had taken up arms against his bailiffs in Italy. He called together the high court of the barons before sailing and informed them that he appointed Balian of Ibelin as his bailiff in Palestine, to administer the lands until he could send out other officers. He embarked with his army, taking on one of the galleasses the white elephant that Al Kamil had sent him as a gift. And some people said he took fair Saracen girls upon his own galley. When he pushed off from the quay at Acre, men standing in front of the butchers' quarter threw entrails and refuse upon his courtiers.

Thus the emperor Frederick made use of a crusade to build an empire. With him the politics of the West invaded the East.

XLII

VAE, CAESAR!

FREDERICK's advent into the East had wrought only a semblance of peace. True, he had made good his vow to go on crusade. Yet he had used Jerusalem as a prop to his empire.

To this giant of Sicily, at heart a pagan, such a dominion appeared as the fulfilment of his destiny. Nations were only beginning to exist then, and he looked upon humanity as one body, a universal mass of men to be ruled by himself. Out of such rule would come universal peace, as in the days of the Caesars. By divine will, he was monarch of all peoples. He did not scruple about laws because *he* was the law.

But he could not sail to the East again, and no second miracle could be wrought there by his genius. Instead, for a decade, he tried to establish his rule through his governors—bailiffs—and in the end he failed.

While Balian of Ibelin held his affairs in charge, the barons of the Holy Land accepted the new conditions. When an astute Italian, Filangieri, marshal of the Empire, came out to take command with Frederick's golden writ of authority, matters did not go so well. Filangieri, affable at first, at-

tempted to confiscate Beirut, and so estranged the high court of the barons. When Frederick's marshal took up arms to enforce his orders, the Ibelins and the barons rallied to resist him, and open conflict followed, first in Cyprus, then on the Syrian coast. The barons prevailed over the German officers, and Frederick's liegemen had to withdraw into Armenia or return to Italy.

Meanwhile Frederick took to himself the title of king of Thessalonica, and espoused the cause of the Byzantine nobles who were in conflict with the French adventurers in Constantinople—he even married one of his daughters to the Byzantine emperor, and refused to allow reinforcements to pass through his lands to the hard-pressed knights of Constantinople.

He had no hesitation in saying that he looked for the Byzantines to regain their city, or that they would become his vassals. And he wrote frequently to Al Kamil, to maintain the friendship between them.

Upon his return to Italy, the emperor was met by news that must have amused him vastly. Willingly or unwillingly, he had given the papacy, by his absence, rope to entangle itself. And Gregory IX, aged and indomitable, had tried to draw the sword against Frederick. While Frederick was away on crusade, Gregory proclaimed a crusade against him, and collected benevolences even in England to use against the sacrilegious emperor.

The papal forces assembled in Italy, and made some headway against Frederick's lieutenants. The outraged John of Brienne was in command under the papal banner bearing the crossed keys.

"Behold the ways of the Romans," said Frederick, on landing.

His veteran soldiery, wearing the crusader's cross, was more than a match for the small forces gathered by Brienne, and all Gregory's wrath could not prevail against the generalship of the Hohenstaufen. The crusader's cross went into battle against the papal keys, and Frederick was victorious.

Gregory was forced to lift the ban of excommunication and grant a truce, favorable to his adversary, the emperor. And so, in 1230, ended the first phase of their conflict, during which a little good and much harm had been done to the cause of the crusades. Frederick had made the Holy Land no better than a pawn upon his gaming board of empire, and Gregory had invoked a crusade against the greatest monarch of Christendom. The mills of Fate were grinding slow, but they were grinding small and sure.

The truce of the year 1230—during which the pope and the emperor met in amicable and jovial talk, while they measured and appreciated each other—was only a makeshift, and it ended as makeshifts do. And when it ended, something titanic happened.

The struggle that had been going on between the Church and the Empire for two hundred years became actual war again, but this time without mercy or respite. Not a war of ordered armies and marches and sieges. It changed into a worse thing—a war of extermination. And into it were drawn men and resources from all the byways of Christendom. It brought on again the murk of the Dark Ages, plunging the lands into a twilight of the earthly gods. The emperor who had the affairs of men and property in his hands was at death grips with the Church that ministered to the souls of men.

Not yet had nations emerged out of the welter, and not yet had individuals found voices or convictions. Men still thought of themselves as members of one universal family; hemmed in by the masses of their fellows, they looked for guidance to their two resplendent overlords, the emperor anointed of God, and the pope, the Father of the Church. Now these overlords were striking each other down.

The struggle centered around Rome.

St. Augustine had dreamed of a universal city that should bring ultimate peace, and now others dreamed of emperors-to-be who would restore the lost peace of the elder Roman Empire.

In their thoughts the actual city of Rome played its part.

Here the Caesars had ruled and had been entombed; here, without doubt, was the seat of universal empire. Pilgrims visited the half-ruined city of the Tiber not only to pray at St. Peter's but to behold with their eyes the Forum that had seen the triumphs of Augustus and Trajan. To be sure, they found thieves quartered in the cellars of the Forum, and the mausoleums made into fortresses by the nobles of Rome. But they still looked to see Rome restored to its former grandeur.

Nearly a hundred years later, the exiled Dante would still call upon the emperor of his day to enter upon the imperial heritage. And still later Cola di Rienzi would cry to his master Charles to rebuild the Empire from the wreckage of Rome.

To the men of Frederick's day Rome was the eternal city, the fitting abode of the two masters of the world, and the faubourg of the Eternal City that lay beyond life itself.

Frederick, passionately eager for personal glory and almost sensuously delighted by conflict, did not begin the final struggle wholly of his own accord. In his memory lingered the trumpet blasts of Barbarossa and the challenge of his father, Henry VI. Even less did Gregory seek the final decision. He no more than followed doggedly the path prepared by the great Hildebrand, and paved by the ambition of Innocent III. At some time the decision had to be reached—whether the pope or the emperor would become temporal ruler of Christendom. Innocent had almost won this ultimate dominion for the papacy, but Honorius had lost ground to Frederick.

The decision was now at hand, bringing with it the end of the old dream of universal empire.

The actual cause of breaking the truce was slight—a dispute over lands in Lombardy. It brought proclamations from the two antagonists, confiscations by both sides, arming of the liegemen, and finally open war. Frederick advanced into north Italy to scatter the adherents of the papacy and to put an end to the temporal dominion of Rome.

Even at war, his fertile mind played with new projects—a university in Naples, or imperial judges to be seated where feudal lords and bishops had been the only law in the past.

He could juggle with the Lombard League, while he did away with the old feudal order—building up state monopolies on the Moslem plan. Sicilian Arab bowmen formed his bodyguard. In a diet at Mainz he laid down a plan that would bring about national law to replace ecclesiastical courts, and do away with trial by ordeal; into Cremona he marched in triumph with his white elephant—Al Kamil's gift—drawing the car that held his standard, with the son of a doge of Venice chained to the standard pole. To those who beheld him he appeared an imperial messiah, or a viceroy of Satan.

"By the authority of the Father, and by our own authority, we excommunicate and anathematize Frederick, the so-called emperor, because he has incited rebellion in Rome against the Roman Church for the purpose of driving the pope and his cardinals from the apostolic seat. . . . We absolve all his subjects from their oaths of fidelity to him, forbidding them to show him fidelity so long as he is under excommunication. In regard to the accusation of heresy which is made against Frederick, we shall act upon it in the proper time."

Thus Gregory, fully aroused to his peril. And he deposed Frederick by papal edict.

"Was there ever such presumption?" cried the emperor, when the news was brought to him. "Where are the chests that hold my treasures?"

And when the caskets of his regalia were brought hastily before him, he had them opened. "See now whether my crowns are lost! The pope and all his synod shall not take them from me. Has he dared depose me—a prince who has no equal? So much the better. Before this I was bound to obey him, but now I am absolved from any obligation to keep peace with him."

Against the popes themselves he railed with an eloquent tongue: "These shepherds of Israel who are not the pontiffs of the Church of Christ."

And Gregory, no mincer of words, announced that Frederick was like to the blasphemous beast of the Apocalypse, the beast that arose from the sea.

It was about this time [the chronicler Matthew of Paris relates] that evil reports became current which blackened the reputation of the emperor Frederick. It was said that he was weak in the faith, and was a heretic. What right have we even to repeat such things! His enemies said that he believed more in Muhammad than in Jesus Christ, and that he had Saracen women as concubines. Among the people, there was a complaint that he had been allied to the Saracens for a long time, and that he was more friendly with them than with Christians. . . .

As to the truth of this, only He knows who knows all things.

Through the murk of conspiracy, and the tumult of combat, Frederick moved steadily toward Rome, as Barbarossa had done. Through impalpable but destructive forces he cut his way with the sword.

A priest of Paris [so the chronicler Matthew declares] was ordered to pronounce the ban of excommunication against the emperor, although he was unwilling. He said: "Listen all of ye! I have been ordered to pronounce against the emperor Frederick, in the light of candles and with the sounding of bells, a solemn sentence. I do not know the cause of it, but I do know the gravity of it, and the inexorable hate which divides the two adversaries. I know also that one has wronged the other, but I do not know which it is. As much as lies in my power, I excommunicate *that one*—that one, I say, who did wrong to the other. And I absolve the one who endured this injury, so harmful to Christianity."

All Italy was under arms, while Frederick marched on Rome with his trainbands.

Gregory prepared to defend his citadel. In solemn procession he bore the relics of the cross, brought hither from Jerusalem, and the heads of the apostles—that had been carried hither from Constantinople. The procession wound from the Lateran hill to the basilica of St. Peter. Within the church, Gregory laid the relics upon the papal altar and placed his tiara beside them. When he had prayed, he turned to the assembled people and gave out with his own hand crusaders' crosses, for them to wear in the combat against the emperor.

Even tidings of fresh calamity in the East could not turn

his thoughts from the struggle with his antagonist. He preached a crusade against Frederick, while the din of fighting echoed in the streets beneath him, where adherents of the emperor had fortified themselves in the great baths of Constantine and the mausoleum of Augustus.

Frederick advanced to the hills of Tivoli, where, through the malarial mists of the plain, he could see the brown ramparts of Rome. He was preparing for his final triumph when victory was snatched from his hand.

The aged Gregory, worn out by the conflict, had died. So the papal throne, in August, 1241, was vacant. No enemy in human form confronted Frederick, and he marched away from Rome.

For months the cardinals dared not elect another pope. Frederick could not make war upon a papacy that lacked a pope. He could not overthrow a deserted throne. Frustrated and angered, he retired into his own lands. And even he, the arch-jester, could not smile at the irony of the fate that had rendered him helpless in the hour of success.[1]

But he was occupied just then with a fresh peril that had come out of the Far East. The storm that had brushed past twenty years ago—and had struck fear into the sultan of Cairo—now broke with all its force upon eastern Europe. It swept over the steppes of Russia, ravaged the fields of Poland, crossed the heights of the Carpathians, and penetrated Silesia to the edge of Frederick's lands.

It came in silence, with smoke rising above it. It was made up of dark masses of horsemen, and it was the Mongol horde.

A generation ago it had followed Genghis Khan out of the Gobi Desert—out of the limbo of things, to sniff at the borders of Christendom and draw back into its barren lands.[2]

It moved with the swiftness of a storm-wrack driven

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[1]Baldwin of Constantinople patched up a peace between the two sides that was no peace, because Frederick only awaited the advent of a new pope to resume the conflict. He conceded the inviolability of the papal state, in exchange for exoneration for himself and his followers. But public opinion, which had been in his favor after the return from Jerusalem in 1229, was now turning against him.

[2]The author has described the life of Genghis Khan and the campaigns of the Mongols in a previous volume. Space does not permit a dissertation here. Europeans in the Thirteenth Century called the Mongols Tartars.

before the wind, and it crumpled armies in its path as wind blows chaff from the threshing field.

Beholding the clouds of horsemen clad in leather and gold and black lacquer, good people cried out that here were the legions of Anti-Christ come to reap the last harvests. The duke of Silesia went down before the horde with his Bavarians and Teutonic Knights; and Ponce d'Aubon, master of the Templars who had volunteered to go against the pagans, wrote to his young lord, St. Louis, in France: "Know, Sire, that the barons of Germany and those in Hungary have taken the cross to go against the Tartars. And, if they be vanquished, these Tartars will not find any one to stand against them as far as your land."

But before this letter reached the hand of St. Louis, the Hungarian host had been vanquished, and Ponce d'Aubon lay lifeless on the field of battle with all of his Templars.

In Frederick's lands the tocsins rang, and the people prayed to be delivered from the fury of the Mongols. The horde had been seen at Nieustadt. Frederick, who was then —in 1241—marching toward Rome, offered a truce to the pope Gregory, so that their armies could unite against the Mongols, but Gregory would not hear of it. Frederick then wrote to Henry III of England urging an alliance against the horde, without result.

He was soon summoned by the horde to yield himself and his people and to journey to the Gobi to become a subject of the great khan, and fill whatever post might be offered him at the court of Karakorum. To this Frederick answered good-naturedly that he knew enough about birds of prey to qualify as the khan's falconer.

While he awaited the approach of the storm, he observed philosophically to Henry, "These same Tartars must be no less than the punishment of God visited upon Christendom for its sins."

Friar Roger Bacon wrote that they were verily soldiers of Anti-Christ, marching toward Armageddon. Matthew of Paris related in his chronicle that they were eaters of human flesh who put women to death with strange ravishments.

But western Europe was spared such a fate. Tidings from

the Gobi recalled the horde to its homeland—the great khan was dead. And the Mongol armies vanished for the second time into the steppes.

A new power, unapproachable and irresistible, had appeared in the Western world, dwarfing even the sultan of Cairo and the emperor Frederick and the popes of Rome. Over the Holy Land this power cast its shadow.

XLIII

AT THE TABLE OF THE HOSPITAL

FAIR was the coast of the Holy Land. Never had it been more fair than in the years that followed 1240. Pilgrims, coming in the spring and autumn fleets, found here the peace that was not known at home.

They did not find, it is true, the Kingdom of Jerusalem, about which their grandsires had talked. Saladin had shattered that, and the great emperors had taken the crown to add to their regalia.

The parts of the kingdom now had lords of their own—the beautiful island of Cyprus had its king and court, and in the northern coast Antioch had become a city of the Greek and Armenian lords. The coast of the Holy Land was held by the strong hands of the Hospital and the Temple, although the old crusader families clung to their fiefs.

Pilgrim galleasses now sailed often into the stone-walled harbor of Château Pèlerin. This was the stronghold of the Templars that the Arabs called Athlit. Patiently it had been built upon the black hard rock at the sea's edge. Half out upon the sea, and half upon the land, its tawny limestone walls towered skyward. Within its port, galleys were drawn

up on the sand, and within its outer barrier wall orange groves and fig trees cast a welcome shade.

Here the pilgrims found unwonted comforts. In the castle hospice they could store their belongings and sleep upon clean pallets. They ate in the long refectory, cooled by the sea air and the thick stone walls. The narrow embrasures of the refectory looked out upon a terrace covered by a silk awning, and here the officers of the Temple could be seen in talk, wearing the somber mantles of the order. They had the administration of the castle *casals*, or village lands, the care and transport of the crops, the lading and discharging of the cargo vessels now owned by the Temple. Moreover, they had now to act as bankers, to discount bills of exchange brought by Italian merchants, and to pay silver to the pilgrims against the money orders brought from the commanderies of the Temple in France.

At matins and at vespers the pilgrims mingled with the tonsured warriors, bearded and sun darkened, wearing the red cross upon their weather-stained surcoats—kneeling against the carved benches of the white marble church that had been built in the very shape of the *Templum Domini* at Jerusalem.

The pilgrims found that Château Pèlerin was hostel and almshouse, port and monastery, bank and fortress. They had never seen anything of the kind before. And they marveled much at the great stables built underground, from which hundreds of horses were led out for the knights to ride on patrol, or the voyagers to journey down the coast.

Some of them, perhaps, went north instead, to visit reverently the smoke-darkened cavern where Elijah had taught his followers under the height of Carmel. If they journeyed on, along the coast road, they came to embattled Acre with its great warehouses and terraced palaces—where of nights the elder men and minstrels related the saga of King Richard and the sultan Saladin.

Upon the dusty road they met Moslems in from the desert, sitting sidewise on the leading camels while behind them long strings of camels swayed slowly from side to side under heavy bales that smelled of spice and wool and sesame. Even

when the pilgrims lay at night within roadside hostels, listening to the gentle pulse of the sea, they heard the distant clanking of the camel bells. When they asked how the Arabs came to be free of Christian roads, they were told that the Templars followed a policy of peace with the Moslems, and that they were friends with the men of the sultan of Damascus.

If the wayfarers ventured farther north—past the sandy peninsula of Tyre where even the cathedral was dwarfed by the clustering monasteries—they found themselves in the shade of the pine forests of Beirut. Other travelers walked beside them, gray friars barefoot in the dust, wandering cheerily from village to village and sleeping with the dogs and all the fleas—or thin, stately Syrians who knew more of the Scriptures by memory than the priests—stout Turks riding small horses and followed by women that seemed to be animated bundles of black veils. The women walked and carried the burdens, for a true Turk would not burden his horse.

Italian merchants, arrogant in black velvets, rode under parasols upheld by slaves, while behind them guarded by armed men appeared the mules and carts bearing their goods. Parties of Jews came by as well, their earlocks shaking under their wide hats—clamoring in loud talk when no one was near, but walking in discreet silence past the cavalcade of a Christian knight.

And many cavalcades of crusaders came and went in the Holy Land during these years. Thibault of Champagne and king of Navarre landed with his vassals, going out to the frontier with the valiant count of Bar. The English duke, Richard of Cornwall, followed him, and went south to rebuild the double walls of Ascalon, after driving off the Egyptian Moslems.

Some of the crusaders abode at the northern headquarters of the Hospital, *Marghab*—The Watcher, as the Arabs called it. This had just been completed, and to the crusaders it appeared a very marvel of strength.

Marghab could be seen for leagues, since it crowned the

summit of a solitary hill, twelve hundred feet above the sea. Built of black basalt, upon foundations that extended far into the ground, its towers overhung the steep slopes of the hill. Men pointed with pride to its Great Tower, outthrust from the end of the citadel, mightier in girth than any other tower built by human hands. Yet below the Great Tower were outer walls and a separate donjon. One crusader has left this description of the master work of the Hospitalers:

We climbed to Margat,[1] a vast castle and well fortified, having a double circuit of walls strengthened by many towers that seemed rather to have been shaped to hold up the sky than to add to the defense of this place—for the mountain on which the castle stands is most high, and appears like Atlas to sustain the firmament. The slopes of the mountain are well cultivated, and the crops of its lands amount to five hundred loads each year. Often the enemy attempted to plunder these rich harvests, but always in vain.

This castle held in check the Old Man of the Mountain, and the sultan of Aleppo, so much so that in spite of the many castles they owned, they were forced to pay to it an annual tribute of two thousand marks, to keep the peace. Every night, to prepare for any eventuality and to guard against treachery, four knights and twenty-eight soldiers mounted guard. In time of peace besides the ordinary habitués of the place, the Hospitalers keep there a garrison of a thousand men, and the citadel is provisioned with all needful things for five years.

The Arabs said that Marghab was impregnable—except to the angels. And even to the end it was never taken by assault.

There the Hospitalers kept open house. In the evenings after vespers a varied company gathered about the supper tables, where the knights sat in the black habit of the order, and the youths served them with meat and wine and fruit.

[1]The crusaders called it Margat, and apparently the Arabs christened it with a name similar in sound. In this part of Syria the hillsides are terraced for cultivation. These terraces, in the Thirteenth Century, must have been down near the base of the mountain, because the summit is very rocky. Marghab could not have lacked for water, because even to-day there is a well at the summit, and the ruin of a reservoir a little way down the slope. The present writer made an examination of the place and believes that an underground passage led from the castle to the reservoir.

They were all men of gentle blood, the sons of nobles, and they had come from so many lands that they were divided into different "tongues"—German, Italian, French, and Provençal, English and Catalan and Spanish.

The crusaders, their guests, seated by the officers, wondered at the talk of Eastern princes and arts—for the Hospitalers had read, some of them, the Arab poets and the geographer Idrisi, and the philosopher Averroes, whose works had been banned by the *Curia* of Rome. They knew of the ambition of the emperor Frederick and rather sympathized with him, perhaps because the Templars opposed him.

These same Templars, the knights of the Hospital said, had become their hereditary rivals. For one thing, the Templars were mostly French and mostly monks, while at the tables of the Hospital sat the younger sons of all Europe's nobility. For another thing, circumstances had made the two orders rival landlords—in the troubles of the last generation the old families of Outremer had disposed of the castles and villages they could no longer maintain or guard to the rich military orders. So the Hospitalers collected a road toll from the bands of Templars who rode past Marghab's hills and in their turn the Templars charged the white-cross men a high price for the salt that was mined near Château Pèlerin. Then, too, the Templars were strict and stubborn, and obedient to the bulls of Rome.

The nobility of the Hospital—and the barons of Syria—had grown weary of the exactions of Rome. They were tolerant and curious, and friendly to the new knowledge. They discussed openly the new silver map of the world that Idrisi was etching at the court of Palermo; they had libraries of Arabic works—forbidden by Rome. They mentioned Muhammad lightly, without crossing themselves, and they argued deftly with the priests who came out as pilgrims—the priests who still said that the Arabs were servants of Mahound, to be hunted down and slain.

The nobles of the Hospital had found the Arabs cultured gentlemen, very wise in matters of politics and medicine—the Hospital, which had its first-aid work to do, took a pro-

fessional interest in that—and much better company than the priests who talked of war. Of necessity, the Arab amirs and the Hospitalers fought at times, but they did not carry the war around with them.

Gay was the talk, and strong the red wine of Cyprus. At any hour the men at the table might be called upon to lead a foray across the border, and they made the most of the hours that were left to them. Their master was captive to the sultan of Cairo, and many of their brethren who had been sent south with the count of Champagne had come back lying under their shields, to be buried in consecrated ground. And the drinkers knew that their time also would come, when the stonecutters would carve their name upon stone.

They knew the secrets of the frontier—how the friendly sultan of Damascus had returned the castles of Safed and Belfort to the Templars to gain the pledge of their aid. Truly, the sultan should have bethought him of the Hospital! And they mocked the luxurious life of the nobles in Cyprus who had the sea between them and the enemy. The men of Cyprus had made the island safe for trade, indeed. They stained their hair red with henna like the women—aye, and their fingernails. They had so much money that after they had built French cathedrals in the pine forests, they could afford to marry Venetian wives. The Venetians were licking their chops over the island, and some day they would gulp it down.

Meanwhile the Hospitalers had to go hunting for the Assassins in their hills, and follow venturesome pilgrims to see that they did not come to harm.

Always the pilgrims were glad in the great church of Bethlehem. At home they had visited the places of many relics, undoubtedly wonder working, and splendidly encased in silver and gold. But here they were treading the ground that the Magi had trod, and they threw themselves down to kiss the threshold. They went forward between marble columns golden in hue, worn at the base by the pressure of countless bodies.

Quiet and most seemly was this place to their eyes. Above

the twined leaves of the column heads glinted the mosaic figures of the blessed saints that seemed to be floating upward. The sunlight, striking through windows of painted glass, cast a mellow glow into every corner. Tears came into the eyes of the wanderers, beholding such beauty in the place that was, of all places, the most joyous.

"*Ave Maria, gratia plena*," their lips murmured.

They looked up at the soaring arches, hearing an echo of their prayer in the space above them. They had cast off their shoes; they had fasted, but heavy upon them they felt the burden of the sins of life that they had brought with them to this church of the blessed Mary. Some of them knelt by the white marble barrier of the choir, not daring to go on.

They who ventured behind the choir passed between two groups of slender twisted columns; they descended a stair worn hollow by other feet before them until they came out within a crypt where candles burned. They saw a gold star set in the marble paving of the crypt. Beside the star stood a man in armor, but wearing no sword. He did not move or speak to them as they went to kneel at the side of the crypt that opened downward into darkness.

In this spot the Magi had knelt, when the marble flooring had been the earth floor of a stable, and, instead of a knight in armor, an angel had stood guard over the birth of Mary's Son.

The pilgrims went back into the golden light of the church.

"*Laetare Regina Coeli*," they sang. And they rejoiced as they sang, because no man could visit this place, of all the places on the earth, and not feel glad. They lingered in the long nave, touching the walls with their hands, loath to go out across the threshold again. When the light grew dim and the echoes quickened in the arches above them, they went forth.

They were the last to behold the church of Bethlehem as the hands of the crusaders had built it.

XLIV

BEAUSÉANT GOES FORWARD

It happened with the swiftness of a storm in summer. And it was over almost before the tidings of it had gone across the sea.

The crusaders had had some warning. For the last three years the Moslems of Damascus—Arabs of Saladin's clans—had told the Hospitalers of the new scourge that had come out of the East. From time to time the hoof beats of the Mongol horses passed near Aleppo, leaving destruction in their tracks. In the summer of 1244 there was fighting where the Turkomans tried to turn the riders of the horde from their hills. But the Mongols themselves did not appear then in the Holy Land.

Instead a smaller horde, fleeing before them, swam the Euphrates and galloped headlong down to the southern desert where Gaza lay. The newcomers were Kharesmians—barbaric warriors of Turkish race, only less formidable than the Mongols. They numbered more than ten thousand and they had all the cunning and endurance of the nomads who once hunted around Lake Aral. They had been driven far to the west, to the sea itself, and now they looked around for

new lands and spoil—as a wolf pack driven forth by a forest fire looks for fresh hunting grounds.

In their path lay Jerusalem, dismantled of its walls. To the Kharesmians the city was no different from others, and it offered loot for the taking.

Over the ruined ramparts surged the horsemen of the steppe, riding down the weak defense of the Christians who took up arms against them. So suddenly had they come up that the army of the Temple and Hospital had not time to reach the city—although, without walls to protect them, they could have aided it little.

No chronicler has written the story of this destruction of the city. It is said that seven thousand Christians, women and children with the men, died there. The church doors were beaten in, and the altars pillaged of their sacred vessels.

Torch in hand, the Kharesmians invaded the Sepulcher, filling their saddle bags with the silver candlesticks and gold ornaments. They broke open the tombs of Godfrey and Baldwin, to search for jewels and gold. They smashed the shrines, and when they left, the Sepulcher that had been spared during generations of warfare was wrapped in flame and smoke.

As swiftly as they had come, the horde departed. But on their heels the Moslems of Cairo swarmed in, and the desecrated Jerusalem was lost to the Christians.

The mamluks of Cairo saw in the advent of the pagan clan a dangerous but a timely weapon. An army was sent from Egypt to join forces with the Kharesmian khan, to advance against Damascus and the lands of the crusaders. The combined strength of the invaders amounted to fifteen thousand horsemen, under command of a one-eyed mamluk Baibars, the Panther. But the wild Kharesmian clansmen, fresh from the central Asia wars, were more formidable even than the mamluks.

Warned of the approaching peril, Sultan Ismail of Damascus assembled his forces and appealed urgently to the Templars to make common cause with him—pointing out that if the Kharesmian horde took Damascus, the Holy Land would suffer the same fate.

So the small armies of the Temple and the Hospital—always in readiness to take the field—rode south, with the patriarch of Jerusalem and the barons of the Holy Land. They went as volunteers, for no king was there to summon them to arms, and they went with full knowledge of the odds against them—they numbered some five hundred knights of the Temple and two hundred Hospitalers, with perhaps ten times as many men-at-arms of the two orders, and the liegemen of the barons. They found awaiting them, under command of Al Mansur of Hamah, the Moslem cavalry of Damascus, the army of the amir of Kerak. For the first time the black and white banner—*Beauséant*—of the Temple and the cross of the patriarch were ranged beside the black banners of Damascus. The crusaders had joined forces with the great-grandsons of Saladin.

By mutual consent they rode south to give battle before the Kharesmians and mamluks could invade their lands. They descended from the hills into the dry brown plain that led to the sandy waste and the salt marshes of Gaza. And soon their scouts were in touch with the outposts of the mamluks. A last camp, a grooming and saddling of the chargers, and a moment of prayer in the half light before dawn, and they got to horse, seeking their ranks.

The crusaders formed on the right of the allied army. In their array, the Templars held the center, with the Hospitalers and the barons under Walter of Brienne on either side. In this order they advanced at a foot pace without sound, while the drums and cymbals of Al Mansur resounded on their left.

But it was the one-eyed Panther who struck the first blow—swift as a wolf to leap at an opening. He launched the dark mass of Kharesmian horsemen against Al Mansur, in the center of the allies. So devastating was the onset of the warriors of the steppes, who plied their bows with deadly effect as they came on before using their heavy, curved swords, that the Damascus cavalry broke and gave way before them. And the amir of Kerak, cut off on the far flank, could hold his ground little longer.

In their first rush the Kharesmians had swept away two

thirds of the allied army, and now they advanced with the mamluks, with a thunder of hoofs and a thrumming of kettledrums, against the men of the cross. Outnumbered and nearly cut off, the crusaders stood fast. The mailed horsemen of the Temple heard their master's horn resound. *Beauséant* was carried forward, and the knights charged, with the deep-throated chant:

"Lord, grant us victory—not to us, but to the glory of Thy holy Name."

Closing their ranks and casting away their spears, to use their swords the others followed the familiar black and white banner into the mass of surging horses and exulting warriors that pressed about them.

For hours they fought at bay, a hopeless fight. *Beauséant* went down, not to be lifted again. Slain was the master of the Temple. Around the lifted cross a desperate ring of men, ahorse and afoot, with broken mail and bloodied weapons fought, until silence fell over the battlefield and the riders of the steppes flung themselves from the saddles to snatch spoil from the dead.

Walter of Brienne was captive, with the master of the Hospital. From the plain of Gaza only thirty-three Templars and twenty-six Hospitalers and three Teutonic Knights escaped that night, and of the nobles only the patriarch and the seigneur of Tyre got away.

So was fought the Battle of Gaza, that lost Jerusalem and the south of the Holy Land beyond remedy to the pagans from mid-Asia.

The captives were driven in triumph to Cairo, with the heads of their dead companions hanging from their necks. But the Panther and his horde swept on. They ravaged Hebron, and passed through Bethlehem, darkening the streets with blood and stripping the great church of Mary of its gold and ornaments. Damascus fell before their onslaught, and the Egyptian sultan appeared, to take possession of his new conquest.

With the war at an end, the Kharesmians no longer held together. Scattering among the Moslem lords, they became mamluks in their turn—soldier-slaves, serving new masters.

Most of them found their way into Egypt, to serve the mamluk general Baibars, who had come from the Tatars of the Golden Horde, bringing with him the secret of victory.

But Jerusalem lay desolate, beyond reach of the crusaders who had lost southern Palestine. Worse, the men of the cross were no longer able to put an army in the field. The halls of the Temple and the Hospital were stripped of half their men, and the women of the crusaders' castles mourned their dead.

As Hattin had destroyed the chivalry of the Kingdom of Jerusalem, the Battle of Gaza crippled the defenders of the Holy Land. While the knights of Château Pèlerin and Acre made ready to defend their strongholds they had tidings from the North.

There the Mongols had appeared, after conquering the Aleppo region, and Bohemund V, prince of Antioch and count of Tripoli, knowing that resistance was useless, yielded to them, agreeing to hold his lands as the vassal of the great khan, and to pay a yearly ransom. This done, the Mongols withdrew without wreaking destruction.

And the crusaders, clinging to the remaining strip of coast between Marghat and Château Pèlerin, sent appeal to Europe for aid, while they prepared to defend their castles. In these years from 1244 to 1247, the situation in the Holy Land had changed as completely as when Saladin had swept over it sixty years before. The military power of the crusaders had been shattered, but more than that, the power of the mamluks had grown, and the Mongol conquerors had appeared, to remain this time close at hand in the east.

The crusaders waited in suspense while two mighty foemen marched and counter-marched across the hills of the Holy Land. Without the support of a great crusade from Europe, the Christians could not move from their castles.

XLV

THE BLACK YEARS

Anxiously the crusaders waited on the coast of Syria for word from Europe. When a new ship came in, to Acre or Château Pèlerin, they thronged down to the shore to hear what tidings it might bring.

At first the news was encouraging. At last a new pope had been elected—the cardinal Sinibaldo Fieschi, who took the name of Innocent IV. Now, surely there would be peace and understanding between these long-antagonistic sovereigns, the pope and the emperor! With Europe trembling after the Mongol invasion, and with Jerusalem laid waste by the other pagans, the two heads of Christendom would put aside their quarrel and give aid! The Teutonic Knights at Montfort said that the German emperor Frederick had offered to prepare and put himself at the head of a new crusade, to confront these barbarians. But the robed priests shook their heads, saying that this sacrilegious blasphemer was only scheming for his own ends.

Then came startling tidings. Innocent IV had had to flee from Rome, in the garb of a knight, to pass through Frederick's lines. He had taken refuge in France, summoning a

council at Lyons. The crusaders waited eagerly to hear what the council would do.

Gloomy tidings followed. The pope had declared a new crusade, ordering tithes to be gathered in and indulgences offered; but he had also deposed Frederick and had called upon the German lords to elect another emperor. And Frederick had cried out against the papal court, "All the waters of the Jordan will not wash away their thirst for power!"

Months passed, and the advance guard of the crusade did not appear. Yet the tithes were gathered in, and taxes increased, and armed men were seen on all the roads of Europe.

Strange things were coming to pass, the travelers said. Again the holy Father and the great emperor were at war, stirring up the men of the hamlets to take sides, seizing cities, and thundering one against the other. Men who would have come out to Syria found no ships to carry them—for the Italian merchants were on the side of the Church or the empire.

And throngs were taking refuge in convents and monasteries to escape the misery of the struggle that demanded taxes of money from them, and took their goods, and menaced them with purgatory or torture if they did not enlist in this war of the pope and the emperor that stretched its arms into every corner of the world. Heretics had been burned before the Cathedral of Milan, and a priest had been seen standing in the streets of Rome selling indulgences to crusaders who passed through the city, relieving them of their vows to go on crusade.

And weary souls by thousands were following after the begging friars and the preaching friars who wandered through the country, because it was better to live like the animals under forest and sky and to leave their huts and fields than to be burdened with the war. One man said he had seen thirty heretics, women and men, burned before St. Mary's in Rome.

Others related that the churches were sending out judges to investigate rumors of unbelief and heresy. These were called inquisitors, and they were putting common people and lords alike to the inquisition. It was whispered that Frederick had sought for peace, but Innocent would have none of it because he was determined to crush Frederick, so that

he could raise the papacy over the ruins of the empire. . . .

Years passed, and the struggle grew more intense. No aid came to Jerusalem, because all Christendom was divided in the war, and no heed was paid to the few crusaders who clung to the coast beyond the sea.

Innocent IV cast against Frederick all the manifold powers of the Church. The benevolences of Scandinavian villages and the taxes upon the nobles of Rome alike went to strengthen the papal forces. From pulpit and monastery doors, from legate and from canon, issued denunciation of the emperor. Crusaders' crosses were given to those who served the papal side; those who opposed it were branded as heretics.

Innocent wrote in secret to bishops in Germany, to check the preaching of a general crusade while continuing to exhort men to take up arms against the emperor. He ordered Frisian crusaders held in Germany, when they were on their way to the East. In May, 1249, he ordered William van Eyck to send revenues collected for the Holy Land to the treasurers of Rome. He spoke of Frederick as the great dragon who must be overthrown before peace could be restored to Christendom, even while he refused the emperor's proffers of peace. His agents turned Frederick's son against him.

The great emperor found himself striving against the resources of all Europe, collected through the demands of the Church. Even in German towns tithes were gathered, to be used against him. And Germany, weary of the Italian conflict, was splitting up into factions and deserting him.

But more terrible than this was the ceaseless propaganda that turned against him all the prejudices of Christians. The masses of them began to look upon him with horror as he went about among his soldiers; the bells of the churches ceased ringing when he entered the towns. All his wit could not do away with the black anger that was growing against him in the hearts of men. He was outcast, accursed.

The faces of his officers became somber. Even in Palermo, in the gardens of the palace, there was no respite. He was old, now, and given to brooding.

But he did not yield. In the beginning of Yule-tide, of the year 1250, he died in the arms of his bastard son while the Moslem archers of his guard stood about the chamber.

"The heavens are glad, and the earth rejoices!" cried Innocent when the tidings reached him that the greatest of the Hohenstaufen no longer opposed his will. In the next years Frederick's son Conrad and *his* son were hunted from their lands by the papal allies, until with fire and sword and anathema every vestige of the Hohenstaufen was obliterated.

So did the Father of the Church abandon the crusaders, while he took in his hand a sword to destroy his enemy.

But the fruits of victory turned bitter in the tasting. By resorting to arms and refusing peace to his adversary, Innocent had lost much of the allegiance of the common people. The heavy taxes burdened them, and the general disorder broke down old ties. Unrest grew, and took head. The Italian cities, weary of the war, formed independent communes and would no longer hear of Roman rule. Florence shut its gates against the papal legates.

The French and English kings drew more apart from Rome and the demands of the *Curia*. It was openly said that the priests of Rome had pocketed the monies collected for the last crusades, and men began to point in wonder and scorn at the luxury of the papal court—paid for by benevolences.

"By divers wiles the Roman *Curia*," said Matthew of Paris, "strove to take their property from the simple people of God, seeking nothing but their gold and silver."

And the German minstrel Walter von der Vogelweide made a song out of it:

Little, methinks, of all this silver in God's cause is spent:
To part with a great treasure, priests are ill-content.

When Innocent at length would have gone about the preaching of a Jerusalem crusade, there were murmurs of anger and shrugs of indifference. In England men banded together to protest against the levying of tithes for the crusade. Even when Innocent offered indulgence of forty

days to be granted to all who would listen to a sermon on the holy war, men turned aside. At Ratisbon the German burghers, exhausted by the great war of the empire and the papacy, announced that they would put to death anyone found wearing a cross upon his garments.

In the beginning, they said the golden pope Urban had preached the first crusade to set Jerusalem free, and now Innocent had declared a crusade against his own enemies. Long ago the blessed Hildebrand had denounced the emperor who had wished to make his own nobles churchmen; and now Innocent wished to make *his* churchmen nobles.

The popes had called for the crusades, men exclaimed, and they had gathered in money from the crusades—money and great power. But who had given an accounting of the money? And who had answered for the defeats?

In the hopeless years that followed, common people ceased to trust in the old ideals. Instead of looking to Rome as the seat of imperial power, they beheld the miasma of it, the fetid courtyards of the feudal nobles, the assassinations, the soul-sickness, the ceaseless wrangling over money that made the once-proud city a spot of contamination for the Church within it. After the last Hohenstaufen, they ceased to hope for a superhuman emperor. No longer did they trust in the *imperium* of the popes.

As plague and starvation had wrought upon the multitudes just before the first crusade, the evils of the black years stirred men anew. The slaughter of heretics, the fanaticism of the wandering friars seeking the nepenthe of poverty, the secret questioning of the inquisitors of the papal churches, the terror that followed the advent of the Mongols, and the exhaustion that came after the struggle between the emperor and the papacy—all these excited the common men, driving them forth from their homes, as the children had been driven forth by suffering and a craving for peace fifty years before.

In the winter-bound forests, groups of haggard people wandered, crying like wolves, while the wolf packs preyed upon deserted villages. Bands of men ran along the roads in a kind of hopeless exultation. They abandoned churches to seek the most fervent of the friars.

A strange frenzy came upon the sufferers that winter. The dance of death was beheld again in the world. Multitudes rose up in the cities, to beat at the closed doors of the churches.

"Peace—peace!" they cried. "O Lord, give us Thy peace."

Some of them took refuge in the monasteries, eager for the scourging and fasting that would torment their bodies in the hope of calming the agony in their minds. Men called them Flagellants.

Aged hermits were seen issuing from their cells and stumbling upon weak legs toward the gatherings of the self-tormentors. Over the frozen roads throngs marched at night, barefoot, while priests among them raised high the crucifix. From the forests emerged charcoal burners and woodcutters and cowherds, stripping the upper garments from their gaunt bodies—men called them Pastorals.

Naked to the waist, with sacks thrown over their heads, these men and women marched carrying lighted tapers in their hands. Some of them flogged themselves as they went, screaming with pain. Others flung up their arms toward the dark sky, or cast themselves on the ground.

At times these marching bands closed around the churches and sang the Black Mass. They broke into the prisons and loosed thieves and condemned men. Again, they ran toward the churches as if drawn by an irresistible power, and knelt weeping before the altars.

They were marching on Rome. No one knew what drove them on, or what they would do. They made their way toward the great city, and when they swarmed through the gates even the mobs of Rome were appalled. Terror reigned in the city, and hardened men who had mocked all holy things were struck by fear and hastened forth to scourge themselves and bear their candles in the procession.

Thereafter, the popes had to flee from Rome to Avignon for their long exile.

And out of the suffering and the wrongs of these generations the seeds of the Reformation were sown.

The mills of fate had ground exceeding small and sure.

XLVI

THE KING'S SHIP

ONE man had come to the rescue of the Holy Land during these dark years. He was Louis, king of France—that stubborn and debonair prince better known to history as St. Louis.

The first day of June, 1249, when Frederick was making his last stand against the papal power and the Flagellants and Pastorals and the friars of Christendom were forming their processions carrying black crosses, a great ship bearing the crimson oriflamme ploughed through a tranquil sea, heading south from Cyprus toward the flat shore of Egypt.

The ship, a galleass, bore within it a large and varied company. Louis and his queen, Marguerite of Provence, occupied the cabin of the after castle—a space filled with wooden chests and a sleeping pallet. Louis, who towered a head above his courtiers, had to stoop and bend his knees to enter it. Below this state cabin were cubicles filled with the chests of the king's treasure and gear—with guardsmen and Marguerite's ladies.

On deck, rugs and canopies afforded the voyagers shade and freedom of movement. By the mainmast an altar had been erected, and the seamen had seen to it that a carved

figure of St. Nicholas, patron of wayfarers, hung upon the mast. From the after hatch smoke drifted up from the kitchens, and the people on deck heard the clatter of pot lids mingled with the clamor of the chickens and the pigs waiting their turn for the pot.

Around the butt of the foremast clustered the passengers who had marketing to do. Here the inevitable Armenians had stacked their baskets of fruit with jars of olive oil and piles of hard biscuit, rhubarb and vinegar and salt. They had choicer things as well—bits of oriental glass, rolls of silk, and peacock feathers to catch the eyes of the women pilgrims.

Beneath their feet on the main deck were the stables of the war horses, and the cattle that provided both milk and meat for the voyagers. Below the livestock in semi-darkness the naked bodies of slaves moved back and forth monotonously upon the long benches, swinging the heavy oars of the galleass, their hides smarting with salt cuts and maggots. But each man guarded, under his bench, some small stock-in-trade to be bartered at Damietta when he should be allowed on shore. In the stench of sweat and bilge they breathed and labored, their feet braced against timbers above the sand that served as ballast and—being cooled by the bilge water—cellar for the wine kegs of the great ship.

The weather held fair, and this was well. A storm, or even a heavy swell, meant suffering for the men and beasts alike; at such times the market place was deserted, the kitchens became an inferno, and the passengers knelt in prayer to St. Nicholas. But now the square sails painted with a crimson cross flapped against the mast, or snapped out in a puff of wind; gulls screamed round the mastheads, and flying fish glittered fleetingly above the surface of the sea.

The galleass forged ahead with its king and its shrine and its throngs of expectant souls peering into the haze of the horizon for a sight of Egypt's shore. On either hand, as far as the eye could see, other sails bore it company.

"A pleasant sight," observed the young lord of Joinville, "for it seemed as if the whole sea were covered with cloth, from the great quantity of sails."

John, lord of Joinville and high seneschal of Champagne, had an eager interest in everything that went on in the fleet. He shared one of the great ships with a knight of the Brienne family. He admired very much a long galley painted with shields of arms belonging to John of Ibelin, count of Jaffa. Joinville himself was young and light of purse, and had not been able to pay the travel expenses of his nine knights until Louis took him into the royal pay and favor.

Like the other nobles—and all the chivalry of France was here upon the fleet with the king—Joinville had entered upon the crusade at the express wish of his sovereign. Like Louis, he had donned a pilgrim's mantle, had paid all his debts at home and borrowed what he could for the venture. Unlike the king, the young knight had grieved frankly when he lost sight of his lands and his wife. Joinville had in him a boyish humor, and a blunt honesty of tongue that pleased Louis.

"I must say," Joinville remarked once, "that he is a great fool who shall put himself in danger of the sea having any mortal sin on his conscience—for when he goes to sleep in the evening he knows not if in the morning he may find himself under the sea."

"Better would it be," the king observed, "to become a leper than to have the guilt of a mortal sin."

"Thirty deadly sins would I rather commit," the knight said frankly, "than be a leper."

Louis shook his head in disapproval. The levity of his nobles always troubled him, and a profane word angered him. He had the face of a blond angel and the large untroubled eyes of a child. He liked to clothe his tall, stooped figure in somber camelet and woolen surcoat—a friar's habit would have liked him better. In fact he did carry a pilgrim's staff and scrip at times, to the discomfort of his officers. At table he ate patiently whatever was set before him and turned the talk upon the teachings of the Fathers when Joinville and the other courtiers would fain have jested of lighter matters. Since the age of twelve—he was now thirty-four—he had been king of France, and his marriage to Marguerite had been a wedding of boyhood and girlhood.

The gentle tyranny of her husband's ideals weighed upon

the dark and willful girl of Provence. Louis argued gravely that bright garments ill became his wife. Marguerite cherished her embroidered satins, but she did not wear them upon the ship. When Louis once proposed that he should enter a monastery and she should go to a nunnery, Marguerite convinced him that they could do more good in the world outside the cloister.

She had to contend as well with the jealousy of the queen mother, the Queen Blanche, who was so watchful of Louis.

For the queen dowager [Joinville wrote] would not suffer her son to accompany his lady, and prevented it as much as lay in her power. When the king traveled through his lands with the twain, Queen Blanche had him separated from his queen, and they were never lodged in the same house. It happened one day while the court lingered at Pontoise, that the king was lodged in the storey above the apartments of his queen. He had given orders to the ushers of his chamber that whenever he should go to lie with his queen, and his mother was seen coming to his chambers or the queen's, to beat the dogs until they cried out and thus gave warning. Now one day Queen Blanche went to the queen's chamber, whither her son had gone to comfort his lady—for she was in danger of death from a bad delivery. His mother, perceiving him, took him by the hand and said,

"Come along—you will do no good here."

Queen Margaret, seeing that she was to be separated from her husband, cried aloud:

"Alas—will you not allow me to be with my lord, neither when I am alive, nor if I am dying?"

Not until they fared forth on this ship did Marguerite feel that she had her husband to herself—although both she and Blanche had dreaded the crusade. Louis had called for the cross once when the strange illness, the fits of weakness that came and went, was upon him. He had taken oath to do battle for Jerusalem, and all the pleading of the women could not turn him from his purpose.

To his devout and straightforward mind, the duty to journey to the East and redeem Jerusalem was clear.[1]

[1]He sailed to Egypt because his military advisers assured him that it was necessary to capture Cairo in order to move on Jerusalem.

He had tried vainly to make peace between pope and emperor at the council of Lyons, and he had embarked finally in spite of the opposition of both of them—Frederick's open ridicule, and Innocent's secret intrigue. While the pope restrained crusaders in Italy from joining Louis, the emperor wrote to the Egyptian sultan of his coming, and urged the podesta of Genoa to delay outfitting the fleet, while he prophesied the failure of the crusade.

But Louis of France had all the persistence of a friar and all the ardor of the chivalry that was bred in the bones and blood of him. And the proof of it was this fleet of eighteen hundred sails moving over the quiet sea. He had the utter faith of a Godfrey of Bouillon—the faith that sometimes works miracles.

And for once a great crusade was under a single command; because even the legate of the papal court could not swerve Louis from his course.

XLVII

THE MIRACLE

When the king's ship anchored off the beach of Damietta, it seemed to the experienced Templars and Syrian barons that a kindly providence watched over the tall person of the first seigneur of France. Louis scanned the shore—his first sight of the lands of Islam—and asked who were the horsemen drawn up beyond the beach.

"Sire," he was told, "they are Moslems."

Hearing this, Louis would have none of the advice of his counselors who urged him to wait until the rest of the ships came up. He ordered the oriflamme to be landed, and the knights climbed down into the smaller galleys, running them up on the beach and leaping out waist deep in the water. The tall king stood with them when they beat off the charges of the Moslem cavalry, forming in ranks with the points of their shields in the sand and their lances braced against the ground. Joinville heard the barons restrain Louis from riding a course against the infidels alone.

The horses were landed, the chivalry mounted, the scarlet banner of the oriflamme lifted, and Louis advanced—to find the shore deserted and the gates of Damietta standing open. Even the French knights, who were wont to go forward first

and investigate afterward, scented a trap in this. Scouts rode into the gates and returned presently to report the houses of Damietta empty, the streets littered, and only fugitives to be seen, while the storehouses of the bazaars were burning. The Moslem army and the garrison of Damietta had disappeared.[1] The bridges of boats leading inland over the canals were intact.

Louis commanded the prelates to sing a *Te Deum*, and carried the oriflamme into the city that had withstood a previous crusade for a year. It seemed to him that this was no less than a manifestation of divine favor, but he was troubled when the nobles plunged into looting and seized palaces for their quarters.

"You could not throw a stone," he assured Joinville, "from my house without striking a brothel kept by my attendants."

With Damietta thus miraculously placed in his hands, Louis curbed the revelry of his vassals and waited until the season of floods had passed. Then he called a council to discuss what should next be done. Louis placed his trust altogether in providence; but he had passed many years in the camp of war, and he relied upon the advice of his captains.

They were all at the council—his three mighty brothers, Alphonse of Poitiers and the reckless Robert, count of Artois, and the silent Charles of Anjou, who had a giant's strength in his limbs, who brooded over ambitions of his own, and slept hardly at all. Daring soldiers sat beside them—De Beaujeu, constable of France, De Sonnac, master of the Temple, and William Longsword, earl of Salisbury, leader of the English swords. They were men of proved courage, victors in tournament and battlefield, the very paladins of French chivalry.

The count of Artois would hear of nothing but an advance on Cairo, where the Moslem army waited. "If you would slay the snake," he cried, "strike first at the head."

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[1]The Moslems lost Damietta needlessly, by a sudden panic. The amir Fakhr ad Din in command of the supporting army decided to withdraw from the shore toward Cairo. Disturbed by this retreat, the officers of the Kanana clan, the garrison of the city, hastened to follow him after burning the arsenal, and a general panic seized Damietta. The common soldiery and inhabitants fled from the walls, leaving the gates open and all the bridges standing. The sultan at Cairo blamed Fakhr ad Din severely and had fifty-one officers of the garrison strangled.

Other warier spirits argued for possession of the coast and the capture of Alexandria. De Sonnac and the Longsword, who were experienced in the warfare of the East, held their peace. The opportunity was fair indeed—they had 20,000 horse and 40,000 foot, fit and well armed. And the French fought best in attack. Moreover, rumors had reached them of the death of the sultan in Cairo and the disorder of the Moslem army.

In fact it seemed to them as if fate had placed them in the exact position of the first Egyptian crusade, when Brienne and Pelagius had moved upon the city thirty years before. But this time they had been careful to wait until Father Nile had subsided.

Louis meditated and agreed with the opinion of his brother, Robert, count of Artois.

So, leaving a strong garrison in Damietta, and placing Queen Marguerite and the French noblewomen upon the ships in the river, so that they should be secure from harm, the army of France followed the oriflamme up the Nile. They took the road of the other crusade, and the Moslems again awaited the invaders at the fortified camp of Mansura above the branch of the Nile.

Again the crusaders' tents were pitched at the barrier of gray water—the slender barrier that must be bridged before Mansura—within sight of the barracks of the mamluks across the river. The conditions, however, were not the same as before. Louis had the greater strength in men; his armored knights had been victorious in the skirmishing upon the road. If he could throw his army across the river in good array, the disordered mamluks could not stand against him.

He had only three obstacles to contend with—the superior battle craft of the professional Moslem soldiery, and their war engines, and the river itself.

For weeks these three obstacles held back the oriflamme. The French set to work to build a mole out into the river, to effect a crossing. By wooden sheds and mighty stone casters that they called *chat-castels* they protected the men at work upon the mole.

But the Moslems, while they dug away the bank on their

side opposite the mole, wrought havoc among the French engines with their fire casters. It was Joinville's first sight of the Greek fire, and he dreaded it mightily.

This Greek fire [he said] was like a great keg with a tail as long as a spear. The noise it made was like thunder, and it resembled a dragon of fire flying through the air. At night it gave so great a light that we could see objects in our camp as clearly as in the day.

Joinville had reason to dread the flying fire that could not be put out, even when it ran like an angry serpent along the ground. He was on guard over the French engines in the night and if the knights of the guard withdrew from the engines they would be disgraced, while if they remained at their posts within the great wooden machines they might well be burned alive. Every time the Moslems shot a projectile over the river he trembled. The French piled earth around the engines and placed crossbowmen on the end of the mole behind a barricade to harass the Moslems; but in spite of their efforts the mamluk engineers destroyed the king's machines by a volley of projectiles launched at the same instant. It happened during the day, when Joinville was off duty.

The count of Anjou was almost mad at seeing this [he said] for the engines were under his guard. He wanted to throw himself into the fire, while I and my knights gave thanks to God, for if this attack had come in the night we must all have been burned.

Louis had timbers brought up from the ships—dismantling a great part of his fleet to do so—and the engines rebuilt. To show that no blame attached to the count of Anjou, he placed them again under his brother's command during the day, and again the Moslems destroyed them—first clearing away the French soldiers by a barrage of missiles and arrows. The feelings of the outraged lord of Anjou are not related, but Joinville and his knights rejoiced frankly in their second escape.

Then Louis called a council, and the engines were heard of

no more. The Moslems had proved more than a match for the French engineers, but De Beaujeu and the Templars had hit upon another way of getting across the river. They had found an Arab who swore that he would lead them to a ford below the town of Mansura where mounted men could safely gain the other bank. It was decided to make the attempt.

Meanwhile in Cairo there was whispering and fear. Sultan Ayub, the grim and solitary, was no longer to be seen. He had been the friend of the Frankish emperor Frederick; he had tamed the Kharesmians; he had held the White Slaves of the River reined in; for long he had been ailing, and now his hour had come and he no longer appeared in divan or garden court. The whispers said that he had died, but what proof was to be had?

The mamluk lords still dismounted in his courtyards to go into the Presence and receive their orders. Petitions were still sent in, and official papers came forth signed. The Great Palace held fast to its secret in this time of stress.

The lords of the mamluks knew, and the black eunuchs of the sultan's chambers knew, and the Master of the Household knew—but the mobs of Cairo did not: that the sultan lay in his tomb, and a young slave girl sat in his sitting place. She was Shadjar ad Darr—Pearl Spray—and she gave the orders to the veteran mamluks, to Ai Beg the Kurd and to one-eyed Baibars the Panther. She signed the official acts, which were sealed with Ayub's seal. She smiled at the whispering, and cajoled the officers and filled the slaves of the palace with dread of her anger.

She played at being a king, harkening to all the currents of intrigue that filled the bazaars of Cairo. And by her wit and daring she kept the palace quiet while the war went on against the Franks. Ai Beg wooed her, and she promised to wed him; Baibars watched her intently with his one good eye, but she would not reveal to the Panther what she had said to the Kurd. She gathered taxes and sold jewels secretly to buy grain for the mamluks—she matched treachery with deeper guile, and before long the whispers greeted her, queen of the Moslems.

In spite of the Prophet who had cried that a land ruled by a woman was accursed, Pearl Spray ruled Cairo. No woman since the Prophet's wife had ever held dominion over Moslems, but Pearl Spray ruled.

She could not go forth into the public gaze, of course, and the French knights at Mansura dreamed of nothing less than that they were making war upon a girl. Behind the screen of the harim Pearl Spray sat with smooth brow, her henna-stained fingers playing with documents of state and her brown eyes meditative. Should the mamluks gain a victory over the Nazarene knights, she might become indeed queen of Egypt—should her mamluks be overthrown, she would be cast aside, like a girl slave who has lost her beauty.

So she waited until the day in February when a messenger pigeon was caught at the Nasr gate and the message cried at the palace doors, "Woe to Islam! The Franks are across the river. They have slain Fakhr ad Din and have raised their standards in the Moslem camp."

XLVIII

SHROVE TUESDAY'S BATTLE

BEFORE dawn that day St. Louis and the peers of France were in the saddle, full armed. They left the dark camp under command of the duke of Burgundy and the Syrian knights, and with De Beaujeu and the Arab guide leading the Templars of the van, they trotted off into the mist to seek the ford. With them went the bulk of the cavalry—the count of Artois with his knights treading close on the heels of the Templars, along the slippery clay bank of the river, and a regiment of horse archers following. The king himself took command of the main body of the attacking column.

They had agreed that the Templars and the count of Artois were to advance across the ford, and scatter whatever Moslems might be encountered on the other bank. Then they were to hold their ground until the main force of the cavalry with the king could cross the ford and form in ranks. After that they were to press on toward Mansura, while the infantry, left in the camp, worked to finish the mole and gain contact with the cavalry at the town.

Such was the plan. And as at Damietta, fortune favored

Louis. The Arab had not lied. Mist still covered the river when the leading horses splashed into the current, wading through the muddy water that had concealed the ford from them until now.

Not until the Templars had emerged on the far bank were they seen by the Moslem outpost at that end of the ford. Before the onset of the knights the Moslems—only several hundred strong—broke and fled. So the Templars held the bank, and the men of Artois hastened across with the English under the Longsword. Some fourteen hundred horsemen were now on the Moslem bank.

Then Robert of Artois acted on his own account. Seeing the Moslem outposts fleeing toward the gardens of Mansura, he gave order to his followers to go past the Templars and pursue.

"Forward!" he cried. "Forward!"

His knights echoed the cry, when De Sonnac, master of the Temple, rode up and grasped at his rein. "My lord," he remonstrated, "bethink thee of the king's command! We must hold to our ranks."

"Then abide where thou wilt," the French count exclaimed, "but I shall not hold back from the enemy."

"My lord," said Longsword, the English earl, "the host of the enemy lies yonder, and if we ride on, I warrant we shall not ride back again."

The count's hot temper flamed. "Your crop-tailed English are valiant laggards," he gibed.

The insult proved too much for the better sense of the earl of Salisbury.

"No man may say," he retorted grimly, "that I dare not set my foot where he will go!"

He called to his men, and De Sonnac at the same instant ordered the Templars to advance. With the rash count of Artois and the French knights leading, they all galloped upon the Moslem tents and the streets of Mansura. And as the other contingents of crusaders scrambled up the bank, they hastened after the first comers, who by now were spread across the plain in a headlong charge without formation—French, Templars, and English all striving to lead the way

into the Moslem tents. It was a very gallant and disastrous charge.

For an hour it swept everything before it. In the town the mamluks, swarming from their barracks, had no time to draw up in ranks. Some of them mounted and fled, others took refuge in the buildings. The amir, Fakhr ad Din, ran from a bath house where a barber had been dyeing his beard, and got to horse scantily clad. A group of crusaders bore down upon him and killed him.

The charge slowed up in the avenues of tents from which the Moslem archers were sending their shafts. Detachments of the crusaders forced their way through the alleys of Mansura at the heels of the retreating mamluks and galloped on, along the road toward Cairo. But the bulk of the cavalry found its path blocked in the town, where the heavily armed knights urged their powerful chargers through narrow alleys that ended in blind walls or courtyards filled with aroused Moslems. Above their heads and beyond reach of their spears the swarthy mamluks appeared on the flat roofs of the houses, launching crossbow bolts and javelins at them. Rocks and massive jars dropped from above split the shields of the knights and crushed in their helmets, while arrows took toll of their horses. They had no infantry with them, and they dared not dismount. They gathered into stubborn groups, separated in the streets, and fought hand to hand against the mamluks who knew every corner and gateway of the town.

True to his word, William Longsword, earl of Salisbury, pressed on as long as he could carve a way for himself, and was slain with his men. The Templars held their ground valiantly against odds, and without thought of retreat. Three hundred of them perished in the alleys of Mansura with almost all of the mounted archers.

Meanwhile the horsemen of the count of Poitiers had joined in the fighting that extended over the plain beyond the town and the camp. The battle became a kaleidoscope of individual conflicts, one group hurling itself against another, with men separated from their standards. Into this mêlée the one-eyed Panther hurled himself, coming up with his mamluks who were known as the White Slaves of the River.

His counter-attack was in time to cut off the French knights who were riding back from their pursuit up the Cairo road. Some of them managed to reach Mansura again, but could not pass through the town. Surrounded by Moslems, the count of Artois was slain, with the lord of Coucy.

Joinville, it seems, had followed the first wave of the attack. What befell him and the king of France he relates in his own words[1]:

It chanced that my knights and I had passed quite through the army of the Saracens, and saw here and there parties of them—about six thousand in all—who had abandoned their quarters and had advanced into the plain. On seeing that we were separated from the main body, they attacked us boldly and slew Sir Hugues de Trichatel, who bore the banner of my company. They also made prisoner Sir Raoul de Wanon, whom they struck to the ground. As they were carrying him off, we recognized him and spurred our horses to hasten to his assistance. The Turks gave me such heavy blows that my horse could not stand up under them and fell to his knees, throwing me over his head.

I quickly pulled my shield over my breast and picked up my sword, while the lord Errart d'Esmeray—whose soul may God receive in mercy—came toward me. He also had been struck from his horse by the enemy. We went off together toward an old ruined house to await the coming of the king, and as we did so I managed to recover my horse.

As we were going toward the house, a large band of Turks came upon us at the gallop; but they turned aside to a party of our men close by. In passing, they struck me to the ground and snatched my shield over my neck, and galloped over me, thinking that I was dead—and indeed I was very nearly so.

When they had gone my companion, Sir Errart, raised me up, and we reached the walls of the ruined house. There we found Sir Hugues d'Escosse, Sir Ferreys de Loppey, Sir Regnault de Menoncourt, and several others, and there also the Turks came from all sides to attack us. Some of them forced their way into the walls and thrust at us with their spears—while my knights gave me my horse which I took by the rein, lest he run away again.

[1]When this book was written in Rome, the author could not obtain any text of Joinville except the early translation in Bohn's *Chronicles of the Crusades*. He edited and condensed this translation, and has since corrected the narrative from De Wailly's edition of the medieval French of Joinville's chronicle.

Sir Hugues d'Escosse was desperately hurt, having three lance wounds in the face and body. Sir Raoul and Sir Ferreys were also badly wounded in their shoulders, so that the blood spouted from them like wine from a tun that is tapped. Sir Errart had been struck in the face by a sword which had cut off his nose, so that it hung down over his mouth.

"Sir," he said to me, "if I did not think you might believe that I did it to save myself, I would go to my lord of Anjou, whom I see in the plain, and beg him to hasten to your aid."

"You will honor and pleasure me, Sir Errart," I replied, "if you go and seek aid for our lives—for your own is also in great peril."

And I said sooth, since he died a little later of the wound he had. All agreed that he should seek assistance, and he galloped toward the count of Anjou. There was a great lord with the count, who wished to hold him back from us, but the good Charles would not listen. With his men following he galloped toward us, and the Saracens drew off when they saw him.

A little after this I saw the king. He came up with all his attendants, in a clamor of trumpets. He halted on a rise of ground to say something to his men-at-arms, and I assure you I never beheld so handsome a man under arms. He towered shoulder high above his company, and his gilded helm was crested with two fleur-de-lys, and in his hand he bore a long German sword. At the sight of him my knights and I, all wounded as we were, became impatient to join the battle again with him. An esquire brought up one of my Flemish war horses, and I was soon mounted and at the side of the king whom I found attended by that experienced man, Sir John de Valeri. Sir John advised him—seeing that the king desired to enter the midst of the fighting—to make for the river on the right, where he might be supported by the duke of Burgundy and the army that had been left at the camp and where his men might have water to drink, for the heat was very great.[1]

As we were doing this, Sir Humbert de Beaujeu, constable of France, came up and told the king that his brother, the count d'Artois, was hard pressed in a house at Mansura, and entreated the king to go to his aid.

"Spur forward, Constable," cried the king, "and I will follow you close."

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[1]The French cavalry, which was all across the ford by now, had made a half circle to reach Mansura, so it was now opposite its own camp and the mole that the infantry was trying to throw across the last gap of the river, to advance to the aid of the cavalry.

All of us now galloped straight to Mansura into the midst of the Turkish army, where we were separated from each other at once by the greater numbers of the enemy. I kept with the constable, and soon a sergeant came to him, saying that the king was surrounded by Turks and in great danger. Amazed and fearful for the king, we looked around and beheld hundreds of the Turks between us and him—and we were only six in all. I said to the constable that we could never make our way through them—we must circle round them. This we did, taking to a deep ditch by the road, so the Saracens who were occupied with the king's followers did not see us. Perhaps they took us for some of their men.

We came out of the ditch at the river and saw that the king had retired hither, the Saracens pressing after him. Here the Saracens were striking with mace and sword, until our plight became miserable indeed—since some of our men tried to swim their horses over the river toward the duke of Burgundy, but the horses were worn out, and we saw shields, horses and men go down into the water.

You must believe me when I say that the good king performed that day the most gallant deeds that I ever saw in any battle. Wherever he saw his men distressed he forced himself in and gave such blows with battle ax and sword, it was wonderful to behold.

A small bridge was close at hand, and I said to the constable that we would guard it, so that the king might not be attacked from this side. And we did so.

After some little time the count Peter of Brittany came to us as we were guarding this bridge. The count was mounted on a short but strong horse, and the reins had been cut through and destroyed, so that he was forced to hold himself by his two hands round the pommel of his saddle, so that he should not fall off in the path of the Turks who were close behind him. He had been wounded in the face and the blood came out of his mouth like water. He did not, however, seem much afraid, for he turned his head frequently and mocked the Turks.

"Ho!" he cried to us. "By God, have you seen these attendants of mine?"

The constable told me to defend this bridge and not on any account to quit it, while he went to seek for succor. I was sitting quietly there on my horse, having my cousin Sir Jean de Soissons on my right and Sir Pierre de Nouilly on my left hand, when a Turk galloped up from where the king was, and struck Sir Pierre so heavy a blow upon the back with his battle ax that it flung him across the neck of his horse. Then the Turk crossed the bridge to his

own people, hoping that we would abandon our post and follow him, so his companions might gain the bridge.

But we would not quit our post. In front of us were two of the king's heralds, Guillaume de Bron and Jean de Gaymaches. Against them the Turks led a rabble on foot, who pelted the twain with large stones. At last they brought up a villainous[1] Turk who thrice flung Greek fire at them, setting the tabard of Guillaume de Bron on fire. Once Guillaume de Bron caught the pot of Greek fire on his shield, and good need had he—for if the flames had caught his clothing he must have been burned.

The stones and arrows of the Turks which missed the sergeants hit us. Luckily I found on the ground near me a quilted coat of coarse cloth that had belonged to a Saracen, and by turning the opening inward I made of it a kind of shield which was of great service to me. For I was only wounded in five places, while my horse was hurt in fifteen. Soon after, one of my vassals of Joinville brought me a banner with my arms on it and a lance head of which I was in need. Then, when the Turkish villains pressed upon the two heralds, we charged them, bearing the banner, and put them to flight.

When we were returning to our post at the bridge, the good count De Soissons rallied me about chasing such peasants. "Seneschal, let the rabble brawl and bray," he said, "but by the *Cresse Dieu*, you and I shall yet talk over this day's adventures in the chambers of our ladies."

Toward sunset the constable returned, bringing with him some of the king's crossbowmen on foot. They drew up in front of us, while we horsemen dismounted behind them, and the Saracens went away when they saw the crossbows. The constable then said to me, "Seneschal, it is well enough here. Go off to the king and do not leave him until he dismounts in his pavilion."

So I went to the king at the same moment Sir Jean de Valeri came up. The king then took the road to return to his pavilion,[2]

[1]The Christian knights had always held the use of Greek fire and projectiles to be infamous. In this generation of St. Louis, the French chevaliers disdained to make use of the crossbow or long-bow. The lance and sword seemed to them to be the only honorable weapons. Joinville's narrative makes clear how the Moslems, unable to stand against the onset of the heavily armed French riders, tried to trick them, or disable them with missiles, or beat them from the saddle. The Moslems made full use of the battle ax and iron mace, to break the heavy mail mesh of the knights. It was a contest of gallant gentlemen against professional soldiers.

[2]St. Louis pitched his tents that night on the Moslem side of the river, thus separating his army into two parts.

and raised the helm from his head, so I gave him my round iron cap which was much lighter than his helm, and cooler. We were riding together across the river when the provost Henri came to him and kissed his mailed hand. Then the king asked if he had tidings of his brother, the count of Artois.

"Yes, certainly," answered the provost, "I have heard that he is now in paradise."

The provost thought to comfort him for the death of his brother, and said, "Sire, no king of France has gained such honor as you have gained this day."

"We should praise God for what hath come to us."

So said the king, and heavy tears began to run down his cheeks, which many persons noticed. When we arrived at our quarters, we found our pavilions half up; numbers of Saracens on foot had seized some of the cords and were pulling with all their might, while our servants pulled the other way. De Sonnac, master of the Temple, and I charged this rabble and drove them off from the tent. So ended this battle in which many men of grand manners had fled over the river, leaving us few to fight alone. I could mention their names but I will not, because they are dead now.

These Saracens, a powerful people called Bedawins, were running about the abandoned camp of the Turks, seizing and carrying off whatever they could find. The Bedawins were subjects of the Turks, but they always pillaged the side that was worsted in battle. These Bedawins reside not in any town but live in the deserts and mountains; they lie in the fields, making themselves habitations by sticking in the ground poles joined to hoops—like to what women use in drying clothes—and over the hoops they throw tanned sheepskins.

They wear cloaks of hair, and when it is cold or they wish to sleep, they wrap themselves up in the cloaks. In the morning they spread their cloaks in the sun to dry. Those of them who follow the wars always keep their horses near them at night; otherwise they do not arm themselves differently, for they say that no one will die except in the hour appointed. In battle they wield a sword curved after the Turkish manner, and clothe themselves in white linen-like surplices. They are hideous to look at, for their beards and hair are long and black. They live on the milk from their herds, and their numbers are not to be counted for they dwell throughout all the lands of the Saracens. . . .

That evening my people brought me from the main army a tent which the master of the Templars had given me. I had it pitched in front of the engines we had won from the enemy, and after

the king had posted a guard of sergeants by the engines we sought repose, of which, indeed, we had great need, by reason of the wounds and fatigue we had endured in the battle.

Before daybreak, however, we were aroused by cries of "To arms—to arms!" And I made my chamberlain who lay by my side rise and go out to see what was the matter. He returned at once, much frightened, and cried out, "My lord, up instantly! The Saracens have defeated the guard and have entered the camp."

"By Saint Nicholas," I cried, "they will not stay here long!"

I rose at once, threw a quilted jacket on my back, and thrust my iron cap on my head, and rousing my people—wounded as they were—we drove the Saracens from the engines they were seeking to recover. The king, seeing that scarcely any of us had proper armor on, sent Walter of Chastillon, who posted himself between us and the Turks.

Eight of the Turks, armed from head to foot, dismounted and built themselves a rampart of large stones to shelter them from our crossbows, and from this rampart they shot arrows that often wounded our men. I took counsel with my men-at-arms as to how we might destroy this rampart.

Now I had a priest called Jean de Waysy, who overheard our talk, and did not wait for us to act. Alone, in quilted jacket and iron cap, with his sword under his arm, the point dragging so the Saracens would not notice it, he set out toward the Saracens. He came near to them because they took no thought of one man walking out alone. Then he rushed at them furiously, and gave such blows to these eight captains that they could not defend themselves, and took to flight. This astonished all the other Saracens. My priest was well known thereafter to all our army, and men said when they saw him, "That is the priest who, alone, defeated the Saracens."

This happened during the first day of Lent, and that same day the Saracens elected another chief in the place of him who had died on Shrove Tuesday. The new chief found the body of the count of Artois among the dead, and took the count's coat of armor, hoisting it before the Turks and Saracens, saying that the king their enemy had been slain.

Spies informed the king of this, and said that the enemy, believing him dead, meant to attack us.

Stoutly had the chevaliers of France borne themselves in this battle; long had they held their ground against odds;

fearlessly had St. Louis risked his body in the conflict. They had gained a footing across the river, hard by the shambles of Mansura—they had pushed the earth mole across the river, and the king's pavilion was pitched on the far side. They were ready now to advance again.

But they had been defeated. The rash onset of the count of Artois had worked more woe than weal; the flower of the chivalry had perished with the mounted archers in the streets of Mansura.[1] Half of the French cavalry was dead, missing, or wounded, and with the shattering of the cavalry, the army lost its power to attack.

Like bees whose hive has been broken in, the mamluks swarmed about Mansura. And the messenger pigeons flew north to the palace of Cairo where Pearl Spray waited, with tidings of victory. The feeling in the city changed overnight from despondency to rejoicing. The streets were illuminated —musicians came forth to chant in triumph, and mamluks riding through the streets were showered with the blessings of the populace that had been ready to flee the day before.

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[1]The Moslem annals give a clear account of the crisis of the battle:

"The whole cavalry of the French advanced to Mansura, and after forcing one of the gates, entered the town while the Moslems fled to right and left. The king of France had penetrated as far as the sultan's palace and victory seemed to be his, when the Baharite slaves led by Baibars came forward and snatched it from his hands. Their charge was so furious that the French were forced to retreat.

"During this time the French infantry had advanced as far as the bridge. Had they been able to join the cavalry, the defeat of the Egyptian army and the loss of Mansura would have been inevitable.

"At nightfall the French retreated in disorder, leaving fifteen hundred of their horsemen on the field. They surrounded their camp with a wall; but their army was divided into two bodies, the lesser camped on the branch of the Ashmun, the greater on the large branch of the Nile that runs to Damietta."

XLIX

ST. LOUIS AT BAY

In the evening before the battle of Shrove Tuesday, Turan Shah, the son of the late sultan, had arrived at the Mansura camp after riding from the far side of Syria to take command against the crusaders. Turan Shah, more cruel than the mamluks and even at the age of twenty-five a prey to his vices, still had the instinct of leadership in war, and although he was practically a stranger to the mamluks, his orders were obeyed in the crisis.

During the battle the crusaders, unknowing, had almost taken him captive in one of the Mansura palaces; but as soon as order was restored the sultan's son—who was the new chieftain mentioned by Joinville—prepared to move against the Christians. While he mustered his cavalry, he dismantled a fleet of galleys at Cairo and had the timbers transported on camel back down the river to a point below the two camps of the crusaders, between them and Damietta. But he did not wait for the galleys to be rebuilt before he struck at the French king to drive him from the Mansura side of the river. For this blow he found the veteran soldiers under the Panther more than ready.

Joinville, who had ample opportunity to make their acquaintance thereafter, explains the character of these soldier-slaves recruited from every people and trained to lifelong service in arms—a kind of Foreign Legion that was, with the Mongol army, perhaps the only professional soldiery of the time.

It is needful to tell you how the sultan gained his men-at-arms and how his army was made up. It is true that the greater part of his chivalry was formed by foreigners[1] whom the merchants of the sea had bought when young and whom the Egyptians purchased. They came mostly from the east. The children born from these captives the sultan supported and educated, and taught the use of weapons and bows—often watching them display their skill before him.

As they gained strength, their small weapons were exchanged for full-sized arms, and when their beards grew they became knights. These youths bore the arms of the sultan and were called *Bahairiz;* their emblazonments were like his of pure gold, save that, to distinguish one from another, they added red bars with roses, birds, griffins, or other devices. They were called the *halka* or king's guard.

When the sultan wanted anything, he summoned the commander of the *halka*, who mustered the guard by sounding clarions, trumpets, and drums, and told to them the pleasure of the sultan—which they instantly obeyed. When the sultan went to war, he appointed captains called amirs from the ranks of the *halka* to command his other men-at-arms. And, as they displayed merit, the sultan rewarded them more, so that every one tried to surpass the other.

On Friday of that week Baibars and his White Slaves of the River, the *halka*, the regiments of Cairo, and the Arab clans assailed the lines of the Christians across the river.

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[1]At this time the mamluks were recruited mostly from the Bulgars, the Kharesmian Turks, Tatars of the Golden Horde and Turkomans. Many Georgian and Circassian boys were also brought to Cairo. So the bulk of the mamluks were white—the Turks were a white race. They were brought up in the faith of Islam, and many were volunteers from far Asia. For more than five centuries, unruly as they were, they ruled Egypt—only at times under the overlordship of Constantinople—until the coming of Napoleon.

The roar of *Allahu akbar* and the mamluk drums drowned the battle shout of *Montjoie, St. Denis.*

Through the stress of the battle moved the tall figure of the French king, the fleur-de-lys gleaming on his helmet. Tranquil and confident, he went among his knights, looking eagerly for signs of the victory that would open the road to Cairo. He watched the mamluks advance in separate squares with infantry thrown before them to cast liquid fire at the line of the crusaders. He saved the battalion of the count of Anjou from rout, although the hide and tail of his own horse were scorched by the flames.

He saw the Moslems burn the wooden barrier before the line of the master of the Temple, and go through the fire to rout the Templars, after De Sonnac, who had lost the sight of one eye on Tuesday, was slain. He watched De Malvoisin escape the fire projectiles and drive back the Moslems. He heard that the count of Flanders held good his ground, and that his brother, the count of Poitiers, had been taken captive, and freed by a strange and unlooked-for rush of the women and butchers and hangers-on of the Christian camp, who assailed the Moslem horsemen with axes and staves and knives. . . .

And at sunset the French still held their lines, when St. Louis went among them, being weary himself but mindful of their hurts—for many a chevalier had died that day—and spoke with them. "My lords and friends, our Lord hath shown us grace this day, for we have defended ourselves, very many of us being without arms, while they were full armed and on their own ground."

"This battle of Friday," Joinville said ruefully, "was marvelous sharp and severe."

It became clear to the king that he could not advance toward Cairo; but he would not retire from his new position. The Moslems were willing to grant him a respite while they extended their lines to surround the Christian army, and waited for their fleet to come into action down the river.

Three weeks passed, and ships ceased to come up the river from Damietta to the Christian camp. Food became scarce, and wounds festered in the airless, moist heat of the delta.

The crusaders could not go beyond their lines, nor could they discover why the ships did not come to them with supplies.

Meanwhile, something had happened to try the spirits of the knights who had paid no heed to the mocking of the mamluks who rode over to taunt them. Joinville witnessed it, and told what befell thereafter:

After eight or ten days the bodies of the slain which had been thrown into the Nile rose to the top of the water. It was said that this always happens when the gall is burst. These bodies floated down the river until they came to the small bridge that joined the two portions of our army together. The arch of the bridge was so low, it almost touched the water and kept the bodies from floating underneath, so that the river became covered with them and the water could not be seen a good stone's throw from the bridge upward.

The king hired men who labored for eight days separating the bodies of the Christians from the Saracens; the Saracen bodies they thrust under the bridge by sheer force, floating them down to the sea; but the Christians were buried in deep graves, one over the other. God knows how great was the stench, and what misery it was to see the bodies of such noble and worthy men lying so exposed. I watched many hunting the bodies of their friends. They did not find the bodies, but they themselves suffered from infection.

It was the time of Lent, and you should know that we had no fish to eat but eels, which are a gluttonous fish and feed on decaying bodies. From this, and the bad air of the country, the whole army was affected by a disease that dried up our flesh and tanned our skins as black as the ground. Eating such fish also rotted the gums.

This disease increased so much that the barbers were called upon to cut the rotten flesh from the gums, so that their patients could eat. It was pitiful to hear the cries of those on whom the operation was being performed; they seemed like to the cries of women in labor. Some of the afflicted men began bleeding at the nose, and when that happened they died.

The Turks, who knew our plight, made shift to cure us by starvation, and I shall tell you how they did it.

They had drawn their galleys overland and launched them again a good league below our army, so that those of us who had gone down to Damietta for provisions never returned—to our great

astonishment. We knew nothing of this until a small galley of the earl of Flanders, having forced a passage through to us, related how the Turks had their galleys below us, and had already captured four-score of ours and killed the crews.

Because of this all provision was exceeding dear in the army, and when Easter arrived a beef was sold for eighty livres, a sheep or hog for thirty livres, a muid of wine for ten livres, and an egg for a dozen pennies.

At this time I was confined to my bed, having been grievously wounded in the battle of Shrove Tuesday. I had, besides, the camp plague in my legs and mouth and such a rheum in my head it ran through my mouth and nostrils. Moreover, I had a double fever called a quartan, from which God defend us!

Even my priest had the plague, and one day when he was chanting the Mass he became so weak that I leaped out of bed without breeches on, to support him. He finished his chanting but that was his last Mass.

When the king and his barons saw that there was no remedy for these ills, they withdrew the army from the Cairo side of the river to the camp of the duke of Burgundy. It is true that they held some parleys with the council of the sultan. But the Turks refused to accept of any hostage other than the person of the king, and it were better that we should all be slain than that we should give our king in pawn.

Then the good king, Saint Louis, seeing the miserable condition of his army, understood that he could no longer remain where he was, and gave order to march on the Tuesday evening after the octave of Easter, and return to Damietta.

He gave commands to the masters of the galleys to have them ready to convey the sick and wounded to Damietta. He likewise ordered Josselin de Corvant and the other engineers to cut the cords that held the bridges between us and the Saracens; but they neglected to do so, which was the cause of much evil befalling us.

Seeing that every one was making ready to go to Damietta, I went on board my vessel in the afternoon with two of my knights—all that remained to me—and the survivors of my household. When it began to grow dark I ordered my seamen to raise the anchor, that we might float down the current; but they replied that they dared not, for the galleys of the sultan were between us and Damietta.

The king's seamen had made great fires on board their vessels to care for the unfortunate sick. Many of the disabled were waiting

on the bank to be taken on the vessels. As I was urging my sailors to make some little way I saw, by the light of these fires, the Saracens enter our camp and murder the sick. The sailors of the king's ships were drawing in to the bank when they saw the Saracens killing the sick who were waiting to be taken off, and they rowed back to the larger galleys, cut the cables, and drifted down upon my small bark. My men drew up the anchor and we began to move downward. I expected that the galleys would sink me, but we escaped and began to make way down the river.

Then the king appeared at the shore. He had the same illness as the rest of us, with dysentery as well, which he might have prevented if he had been willing to live on his large galleys. That evening he fainted more than once because of this dysentery he had, and so often did he go off to perform his needs that they had to cut away the bottom of his drawers. But he said if it pleased God he would never leave his people. Now observing us make off, his men began to shout to us to remain, and likewise shot bolts at us to stop our course.

I will now tell you in what manner the king was made prisoner, as he told me himself hereafter. He said that he had quitted his own battalion, and with Sir Geoffrey de Sergines, had joined the battalion of De Chastillon who commanded the rear.[1] The king was mounted on a small courser with only a housing of silk. De Sergines alone attended him as far as a village, where the Turks beset them.

Thrice did Chastillon, sword in hand, charge the Turks, driving them from the street of the village to the fields at the end. He was bare of armor, having only the sword in his hand. As they rode away from him they shot arrows back at him, and when they had gone off, he drew the arrows from his body and his horse. Then he came to the king, sitting on his horse, who extended his sword-arm, crying:

"Chastillon—sir knights—where are my valiant men?"

But Chastillon, turning about, saw the Turks again and ran at them.

I heard that Sir Geoffrey guarded his lord by taking his pike under his arm and charging the Saracens every time they drew near.

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[1]Louis had planned to destroy the bridges behind him, to burn his tents and baggage and place the disabled men in the boats, under guard of detachments of knights. Then the able-bodied men were to make their way down the river beside the galleys. But the bridges were not destroyed, the Moslems entered the camp in the disorder of the retreat, and the fire enabled them to see exactly what was happening. Only a handful of the army reached Damietta.

At the village, having dismounted, he entered a house and laid the king in the lap of a woman from Paris, for he had no hope that the king could pass that day without dying. Shortly after arrived Sir Philip of Montfort, who told the king he had just seen the amir of the sultan with whom he had formerly treated for peace, and if it were the king's pleasure he would go back to him and renew the parley.

The king entreated him to do so, and said that he would abide by whatever terms they agreed upon.

Sir Philip went back to the Saracens, but just at that moment a villainous sergeant named Marcel set up a shout to our people. "Lords, knights, yield yourselves, for the king commands it!" At these words all were thunderstruck, and—thinking that the king had indeed given the order—they yielded their swords and staves to the Saracens. Then the amir—who had already lifted his turban from his head and had taken the seal ring from his finger, to show that he would grant the truce—seeing the Saracens leading in the king's knights as their prisoners, said to Sir Philip that he would not agree to any truce, for the army had been made prisoner.

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JOINVILLE'S TALE

We who had embarked on our vessels, thinking to escape to Damietta, were not more fortunate than those who had kept to the land, for we were also taken as you shall hear. It is true that a wind rose up behind us, driving us down upon the Saracens, and the knights fled who had been left by the king in light boats to guard the sick. Toward daybreak we reached the place in the river where the sultan's galleys lay. When they perceived us they set up a great noise and shot at us large bolts covered with Greek fire, so that it seemed as if the stars were falling from the heavens. The wind blew more than ever, and drove us toward the bank of the river where we found the light boats of the knights who had been ordered to guard the sick. On the opposite shore were great numbers of our vessels that the Saracens had taken—we could see them plainly murdering the crews, and throwing the dead bodies into the water, and carrying away the chests and arms. And mounted Saracens shot arrows at us from the bank of the river.

I put on my armor, to keep the bolts from hurting me. Some of my people called to me from the stern:

"My lord, my lord—your sailors mean to run us on shore, because the Saracens threaten them."

I was then very ill, but I rose at once, and, drawing my sword,

I swore that I would kill the first person who tried to run us on the Saracen shore. The sailors responded that we could not go on, and I must choose between landing on the shore or anchoring in midstream. I said to them that I would anchor in the river rather than be carried to the shore where our men were being murdered. The sailors then cast out the anchor.

It was not long before we saw four of the sultan's galleys making toward us. I called to my knights to advise me whether to surrender to the galleys of the sultan or those along the shore, and we agreed that it would be better to surrender to the galleys that were coming, for then we might be able to keep together. Then a cellarer of mine who was born at Doulevant said:

"My lord, I do not agree to that."

I asked him why he did not agree, and he said, "I believe we ought all to let ourselves be killed, because then we will all go to paradise."

But we did not agree to that.

Seeing that we must surrender, I took the small casket containing my jewels and relics, and cast it into the river. One of my sailors said to me, "My lord, if you do not let me say that you are the king's cousin, they will kill you and us with you." I bade him say what he pleased.

When the first galley came athwart us and dropped anchor close to our bow the people on it heard these words. Then God sent to my aid a Saracen who was a subject of the emperor.[1] Wearing only breeches of coarse cloth, and swimming straight over to my vessel, he clasped my knees, and said:

"My lord, if you do not do as I bid you, there is no hope for you. Leap into the river here, where you will not be seen by the men of the galley who are thinking only of the spoiling of your bark."

He called to the galley then, and had a rope thrown across to us. Holding the cord, I leaped into the water, followed by the Saracen. I was so weak that I should have sunk, if he had not helped me to the galley. They pulled me up to the deck of the galley, where I saw some fourteen score Saracens. All the time the poor man held me fast in his arms, and presently landed with me. Immediately others rushed at me to cut my throat—for he who slew a Christian imagined that he gained honor thereby.

Twice they threw me to the ground, and once to my knees, and then I felt the knife at my throat.

Yet this Saracen who had saved me from drowning would not

[1]Evidently Frederick II, who had many Moslem subjects in Sicily and elsewhere

quit hold of me, but cried out to them, "The king's cousin—the king's cousin!" And he was able to lead me to the castle where the Saracen knights were gathered.

When I was brought before them they took off my coat of mail; and from pity, seeing me so very ill, they flung over me one of my own scarlet surcoats lined with miniver which my lady-mother had given me. Another brought me a white leather girdle, with which I girthed the surcoat around me. One of the Saracen knights gave me a small cap which I put on my head; but I soon began to tremble, as much from the fright I had had as from my disorder. When I complained of thirst they brought me some water in a pot, but when I drank a little it ran back through my nostrils. When my own attendants saw this they began to weep. God knows what a pitiful state I was in, with the disease that nearly closed my throat.

The good Saracen asked my people why they wept, and when he understood my sickness, he spoke of it to one of the Saracen knights who bade him tell me to take comfort as they would give me somewhat to drink that would cure me in two days. This he did, and I was soon well, through God's mercy and the draft the Saracens gave me.

Soon after my recovery the admiral[1] of the sultan's galleys sent for me and asked if I were cousin to the king, as it was said. I told him I was not, and explained why my sailors had said it through fear of the Saracens. The admiral replied that they had advised me well, because otherwise we would have been slain and thrown into the river. He then asked if I had any blood-tie with the emperor Ferrey [Frederick] of Germany. I answered truly that I thought that Madame my mother was his second cousin. The admiral replied that he would love me the better for that.

On the Sunday after my capture, he ordered us all to be fetched from the castle, down to the bank of the river. While waiting there I saw Monseigneur Jean my chaplain dragged out of a hold of a galley. On coming into the open air he fainted and the Saracens killed him, flinging him into the stream before my eyes. His clerk also, who was suffering from the common disorder of the army and unable to stand, they killed by casting a heavy mortar on his head, and flung him after his master.

In like manner the Saracens dealt with the other prisoners, posting themselves about the hold through which our men were drawn.

[1]Joinville writes *admiral* for *amir*, or rather *al amir*. The word *admiral* originated in this way with the crusaders.

When they saw any one weak or ill, they killed him and threw him into the water.

I told them, through the interpretation of my Saracen who never left me, that they were doing wrong. For it was against the custom of Saladin, who said that no man should be killed who had eaten of his bread and salt. The admiral made answer that they were destroying men who were ill and of no use. And he had my own men brought before us, saying that my men had all denied their faith. I replied that I did not put much trust in them, for they would forsake his faith as quickly as they had forsaken mine if the opportunity offered.

The admiral assented to this, adding that Saladin had said that a Christian never made a good infidel, nor a good Saracen a Christian. Soon after this he made me mount a palfrey and we rode side by side over a bridge to Mansura where Saint Louis and his men were prisoners.

At the entrance of a large pavilion we found a secretary writing down the names of the prisoners, and there I was made to declare my name, which I no way wished to conceal, and it was written down with the others. As we entered the pavilion the Saracen who had never left me said:

"Sir, I will not go with you, for I can not follow you further. I beg that you will never quit the hand of this young boy you have with you, otherwise the Saracens will carry him off."

The boy's name was Bartholomew and he was a bastard of the lord Montfaucon de Bar. The admiral led me and the little boy into the enclosure where were the barons of France and more than ten thousand other persons with them. They greeted me with pleasure and joyful noise, for they had thought me slain.

Numbers of knights and other men were confined here in a large court surrounded with mud walls. The guards of this prison led them out one at a time and asked each if he would become a renegade. If they said they would, they were taken elsewhere, if they refused they had their heads cut off. Shortly after I came, the council of the sultan sent for the barons, and demanded of us to whom they should deliver a message they had from the sultan. We answered, all of us, by the interpreter, that the message should be given to the count Peter of Brittany. This was the message:

"Lord, the sultan sends us to find out if you wish to be freed."

"Yes," the count answered, "we do."

"And what price will you pay for your freedom?"

"Whatever we can, in reason."

"Will you give any of the castles of the Holy Land?"

"We cannot do that, because the castles belong to the emperor of Germany."

The council then asked if we would not surrender some of the castles belonging to the Knights Templars or the Hospital. The count replied for us that this, also, was impossible, for the garrisons of those castles had sworn on holy relics that they would yield them to no man.

The Saracens then spoke together, and said to us that it did not seem as if we much desired to regain our freedom, and that they would send to us those who knew well how to use their swords and who would deal with us. But they sent to us a messenger instead who assured us that we were to be freed, because our king would ransom us.

In order to try the king, the sultan's council had made the same demands of him as of us. But the good king, Saint Louis, answered as we had done, although the council threatened to torture him. The good king held all their menaces cheap, saying that since he was their prisoner they could do with him as they wished. Finding that they could not overcome him by threats, the council asked him how much money he would give for his release—in addition to Damietta which was also to be surrendered. So the king engaged cheerfully to pay 500,000 livres for the ransom of his army, and for his own ransom to yield the city of Damietta—since he was of a rank in which bodily ransom could not be estimated in money.

When the sultan heard the good disposition of the king, he said:

"By my faith, the Frenchman is generous not to bargain about so great a sum of money. He has agreed to the first demand. Go and tell him that I make him a present of 100,000 livres, so that he will only have to pay 400,000."

Unknown to the captive barons of France, revolt simmered in the Moslem camp and the palaces of Cairo. The man who was sultan in name, Turan Shah, who had granted terms to the Nazarenes, had also deprived of their rank several powerful mamluks, confiscating their wealth for his own officers and turning against him the triumvirate that had carried on the war against the crusaders—that strange triumvirate of Pearl Spray and the Turkoman and the Panther.[1] It was

[1] "The sultan had confidence only in a few favorites," the Egyptian historian Makrisi relates, "to whom he gave the chief offices of the state, displacing the old ministers of the late sultan his father. Above all, he showed dislike of the mamluks,

a perilous matter to brave the victorious mamluks in this fashion; the war had virtually ended, and the mamluks saw clearly that power could not be shared between them and Turan Shah. One must yield to the other, and secretly the mamluks conspired to slay the sultan, who was the last descendant of Saladin's lineage to rule in Egypt. What followed Joinville beheld in part, or heard related.

The conspirators held council with the admiral of the late sultan who had been dismissed from his office, and they won over to their plan the *halka* who have the guard of the sultan's person, and prevailed upon them to slay the sultan, which they promised to do.

They went to work with caution, for they ordered the trumpets and drums to sound for the assembling of the army to know the sultan's will. The admirals and their accomplices told the officers of the army that Damietta had been taken, and the sultan was marching thither and that he ordered them to arm and follow him. At once the officers set off at a gallop toward Damietta. We were frightened when we saw them go off like this, for we really believed Damietta had been stormed.

We were then lodged in a galley anchored before the quarters of the sultan—a great enclosure of fir-wood poles covered with painted cloth. A high pavilion had been pitched at the entrance of this place, and within it a handsome gateway with a tower. Within this was a fine garden wherein stood the sultan's lodgings, with a great tower from which he could look out over the country. From the garden an alley led to the river, and at the end of the alley the sultan had built himself a summer house on the beach where he bathed. This summer house was of trellis work covered with Indian linen.

That day the sultan invited the knights of the *halka* to dine with him in his quarters. After the dinner he had taken leave of his admirals and was about to retire to his own chamber, when one of these knights, his swordbearer, struck him with a sword. The blow fell upon his hand, splitting it between the four fingers.

The sultan cried to his admirals, who had really been the instiga-

although they had gained the last victory for him. His debaucheries wasted the revenues, and he forced the sultana Shadjar ad Darr to render him an account of the riches of his father. The sultana implored the protection of the mamluks. These slaves, already angered at Turan Shah, did not hesitate to take her part, and resolved to assassinate the prince."

tors of the attack: "Witness ye that my men of the *halka* have attacked me—look at my hand."

"We see," they responded, "and now surely you will slay us—so it is better that you should die."

Then the sultan, in spite of his wound, understood that they had conspired against him. He fled to the high watch tower that I have mentioned, near his chambers. Already the men of the *halka* were destroying his other pavilions and surrounding his quarters. Within the tower where he had hidden himself were three of his priests who had just dined with him. They bade him descend, and he replied that he would do so willingly, if they would answer for his safety.

But the men outside cried to him that they would fetch him out by force. They cast some Greek fire into the tower, which being made only of fir and cotton cloth, as I have said, began to blaze all over. Never have I beheld a bonfire so fine, nor so sudden.

When the sultan saw the fire gaining ground on all sides, he went down into the garden of which I have spoken and ran down the alley toward the river. But as he fled one of the *halka* struck him a fierce blow in the ribs with a sword. Then he flung himself, with the sword hanging from him, into the Nile.

Nine other men pursued him in a boat and killed him beside our galley.

One of these knights whose name was Faracatai, seeing the sultan dead, cut him in twain and tore the heart from his vitals. Then he entered our galley and came before the king with his hands all bloodied, saying, "What wilt thou give me, who have slain thine enemy, who—if he had lived—would have put thee to death?"

But the good king Saint Louis made no answer whatever.

After this about thirty of them climbed into our galley with their swords drawn and their battle axes on their necks. I asked Sir Baldwin d'Ibelin, who understood Saracenic, what they were saying. He replied that they said they were come to cut off our heads. Soon after I saw a large group of our people confessing themselves to a monk of La Trinité who was of the company of the count of Flanders. But I could not think of any sin or evil I had done—only that I was about to receive my death.

So I fell on my knees, making the sign of the cross. Sir Guy d'Ibelin, constable of Cyprus, knelt beside me and confessed himself to me, and I gave him such absolution as God may have granted me the power of bestowing. But of all the things he said to me, when I rose up I could not remember one of them.

We were led down into the hold of the galley and laid heads and

heels together. We thought this was so that they could make away with us one at a time. For the whole night we lay bound in this manner. I had my feet right in the face of the count Peter of Brittany, whose feet in turn were beside my face.

On the morrow we were taken out of the hold, and the admirals sent to us, to say that we might renew with them the treaty we had made with the sultan. The king was to swear to give over to them 200,000 livres before he quitted the river, and the other 200,000 he should pay in Acre.[1]

The oath to be taken by the king and the admirals was drawn up in writing. On their part they swore that if they failed in their word they would hold themselves as dishonored as if they had gone bareheaded on pilgrimage to Mecca, or had divorced their wives and taken them back again, or had eaten pork. For according to the law of Mahomet, no one could divorce his wife and take her back again without first looking on while another man enjoyed her—after which he could take her back. The king accepted this oath of theirs because Master Nicolle of Acre, who knew their customs well, assured him they could not have sworn a greater oath.

After the admirals had sworn, they sent to the king a written oath drawn up by advice of some Christian renegades they had with them. The king swore first that if he failed to keep his word, he would hold himself outcast from the presence of God. Then they bade him swear that if he broke his word, he should be perjured as a Christian who had denied God, and that in despite of God he would spit on the cross and trample it underfoot. But when the king heard this oath read, he said that he would never take it.

Hearing the king had refused, the admirals were greatly discontented—for that they had sworn, and he had refused to do so. Master Nicolle told the king that he was certain that unless he took the full oath, the Saracens would behead him and his people.

The king replied that they might do as they pleased. At that time the patriarch of Jerusalem was with the king; he was eighty

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[1]Two women played a great part in saving the French chivalry. The mamluk rebels were half inclined to slaughter all the invaders, but Pearl Spray in Cairo, through the high amirs, prevailed on them to hold to Turan Shah's treaty. And Queen Marguerite, holding Damietta with its garrison, made it clear that the city would not be yielded except by order of the king.

The death of Turan Shah marked the end of Saladin's descendants, and the rise of the formidable mamluk slave-warriors. The disaster to the French king was the beginning of Moslem supremacy.

years old or thereabout, and had persuaded the Saracens to give him a safe-conduct, to join the king. Now the admirals said that it was the patriarch who had influenced the king.

They seized the good patriarch and tied him to a post before the king, and bound his hands behind his back so tight that they swelled as big as his head, and the blood spouted out.

"Ah, Sire!" he cried out, from the sufferings he endured. "Swear boldly for I will take the whole sin of it on my conscience!"

I know not how the oath was taken at last, but the admirals held themselves satisfied at last with the oaths of the king and his barons. They ordered their trumpets and drums to sound merrily before the king's tent, and it was said that some of them wished to choose him sultan, for the king was the proudest Christian they ever knew. They said too that if Muhammed had allowed them to suffer what God had caused the king to endure, they would have lost faith in him.

The king asked me if I thought he should take the kingship of Egypt if they offered it to him. And I said he would be a fool to do so, since they had just killed their king. But he said truly he would not refuse it.

You must know also that the good queen was not without her share of persecution, and very bitter it was to her heart, as you shall hear.

Three days before she was brought to bed with child, she was told that the good king her husband had been made prisoner. This so troubled her mind that she seemed at all times to see her chamber in Damietta filled with Saracens ready to slay her, and she kept crying out incessantly, "Help, help!" when there was not an enemy near her.

For fear that the child in her womb should perish, she made a knight watch at the foot of her bed all through the night without sleeping. This knight was very old—not less than eighty years or perhaps more—and every time she screamed, he held her hands, and said:

"Madame, do not take fright like this. I am with you: rid yourself of these fears."

Before the good lady was brought to bed, she once ordered every person to leave her room except this very old knight; then she cast herself out of bed on her knees before him, and requested that he would grant her a boon. The knight promised, with an oath, that he would do so.

"Sir Knight," the queen then said, "I request on the oath you

have sworn, that if the Saracens storm this city and take it, you will cut my head from my body before they seize it."

The knight replied that he would cheerfully do so, and that he had thought of it himself, before then.

The day she was brought to bed it was told her that the Pisans, the Genoese, and the common men in the town were about to fly, and forsake the king. The queen sent for some of them, and spoke to them:

"Gentlemen, I beg of you for the love of God, that you will not quit this city. For well you know that if you do my lord the king and his whole army will be lost without remedy. Have pity, at least, upon this person who beseeches you, lying in pain."

They answered that they could not remain longer in a city where they were dying of hunger.[1] She said then that they would not die of hunger, because she would buy up all the provision in the name of the king. This she was obliged to do, and all the provision that could be found was bought up, at a cost of 360,000 livres, to feed these people.

Shortly after, the queen was delivered of a son in the city of Damietta, whose name was John and his surname Tristan because he had been born in misery. The good lady was forced to rise before she was fully recovered, and embark on the ships, for Damietta was to be surrendered to the Saracens.

On the morrow of the feast of the Ascension of our Lord, at sunrise, Sir Geoffrey de Sergines went to the city and delivered it to the admirals, and instantly the banners of the sultan were displayed on the walls. The Saracens entered the city and drank of the wines they found there until the greater part of them were drunk. One of the admirals who was against us in all things came to the bank of the river and shouted out to those in our galley that they were to take us back to Cairo.

We should have been delivered with the king at sunrise; but they had kept us until sunset, and we had had nothing to eat. The admirals also did not eat, for they were gathered together to dispute about us.

[1]There were provisions enough in the fleet. The Genoese and Pisans who had ferried the French over were disgruntled by the offer St. Louis had made, in his first attempt to negotiate a peace, to exchange Damietta for Jerusalem. This was refused by Turan Shah. Now that the French crusaders had been decisively defeated, the Italian merchant-mariners were quite willing to sail off, leaving the survivors stranded in Egypt. It is doubtful if Queen Marguerite's plea would have influenced them to remain, but the supplies she purchased at prohibitive cost from them did induce them to wait.

"We shall kill the king and these lords," one said, "and so for forty years no more of them will come against us—for their sons are small, and we have Damietta."

"If we slay the king," another Saracen said against this, "as well as the sultan, it will be said that there is no faith in the Egyptians."

"In doing as we did to the sultan," the first Saracen replied, "we went against the command of Mahomet. Now listen to another command—*For the surety of the Faith, slay the enemies of the Law!* How dare we break two commands, and spare the greatest of the infidels?"

However, as God willed it, the admirals consulted together at sunset and agreed that we were to be released. So we were brought to Damietta and our galleys moored close to the shore. We asked permission to land, but they would not allow it until we had refreshed ourselves—for the Saracens said it would be a shame to the admirals to send us fasting from our prison.

Soon after, they sent us provisions, that is to say loaves of cheese that had been baked in the sun, with hard eggs, the shells of which they had painted with colors to honor us. When we had eaten some little, they put us on shore and we went toward the king, whom the Saracens were leading from the pavilion where they had detained him, toward the water's edge. They surrounded the king on foot, with drawn swords.

It happened that a Genoese galley was on the river opposite the king. Only one man could be seen on the galley, but when he saw the king he whistled. Instantly fourscore crossbowmen with their bows bent and shafts placed, leaped on the deck from below. The Saracens no sooner saw them than they ran away like sheep—not more than three or four staying by the king. The Genoese thrust a plank on shore and took on board the king, his brother the count of Anjou, Sir Geoffrey of Sergines, and the marshal of France and myself. The count of Poitiers remained prisoner with the Saracens until the king should pay the ransom, which he was bound to pay before he quitted the river.

Then the count of Flanders and many other great lords came to take leave of the king and to embark in their galleys for France. With them was the count of Brittany, grievously sick, so that he lived no more than three weeks.

The whole of Saturday and Sunday was taken up in paying the money of the ransom by weight. Before it was all paid, some lords advised the king to withhold a part until the Saracens should have given up his brother; but he replied that since he had promised it he

would pay the whole before he had quitted the river. As he said this, Sir Philip of Montfort told the king that the Saracens had miscounted one scale weight which was worth 10,000 livres. The king was angered at this and commanded Sir Philip on the faith he owed him as liegeman to make up to the Saracens these 10,000 livres.

At this others entreated the king to go out to a galley that was awaiting him at sea, to be out of the hands of the Saracens, and at length prevailed on him to do so.

So at last we began to make some way at sea, putting a league between us and the shore, without a word said—for we were all concerned for the count of Poitiers. In a little while Sir Philip, who had remained to make good the payment of the 10,000 livres, came out to us, calling to the king:

"Sire, Sire—your brother the count is following in the other galley."

The king then turned to those near him and said, "Light up, light up!" And there was great joy among us all on the coming of his brother. A poor fisherman having hastened to the countess of Poitiers with the tidings, was given twenty livres of Paris. And then each of us sought his own galley and we left Egypt.

The king had no other robes than two garments the sultan had caused to be made for him of black silken stuff lined with squirrel skins. During this voyage to Acre I also was ill, and was always seated near the king, and it was then he told me how he had been taken and how he had ransomed us. At times he mourned for the death of his brother the count of Artois.

One day it pleased him to ask what the count of Anjou was doing—for although he was in the same galley, the count had not sought his company. The king was told that his brother was playing at tables with Sir Walter of Nemours. Although he could barely stand by reason of his long illness, he arose hastily and went staggering to where they were at play. Then, seizing the dice and tables, he flung them into the sea, and was in a passion with his brother for amusing himself by gaming, forgetful of the death of the count of Artois and of the great perils from which the Lord had delivered them. But Sir Walter was best paid, because the king tossed into his lap all the coins—of which there were a great pile—on the tables, and Sir Walter carried them all off.

LI

FAREWELL TO PALESTINE

The French chivalry had failed utterly in Egypt. Never had crusaders suffered a defeat so disastrous as the second battle of Mansura. With the collapse of the expedition, St. Louis gave permission to his surviving brothers to return with the great lords to France. But he would not accompany them.

He felt that the honor of the French arms and of Christendom had suffered at his hands on the Nile, and for four years he lingered upon the coast of the Holy Land, hoping to strike a blow for Jerusalem. He had made a ten years' truce with the mamluks, and he sought to gain by negotiation what he had been unable to win by arms. But without an army he could gain little. Only a hundred knights remained with him of the twenty-eight hundred who had assembled at Cyprus, and the survivors had brought the taint of the plague with them from the Nile.

I was lodged [Joinville wrote] with the rector of Acre and was most grievously ill. Of all my servants there was but one who was not confined to his bed with sickness like myself. The more to en-

liven me I saw some twenty corpses pass my window daily for burial, with the chant "*Libera me Domine . . .*"

We seemed a subject for mockery on all parts, for we enjoyed neither peace nor truce from the admirals. You must know that we could never muster in our army more than about fourteen hundred men-at-arms fit for service.

At that time John the Armenian, who was artilleryman to the king, saw in the bazaar of Damascus an old man, very aged, who called to him, asking if he were a Christian.

"Yes," he said.

"Great is the hatred among you," said the aged man, "and far have you been brought down by your sins. For I myself once saw your king, Baldwin of Jerusalem, who was a leper, overthrow Saladin with no more than three hundred men-at-arms. Now, we take you in the field as if you were wild beasts."

Yet they regained their health, and the determination of the king accomplished much. He rebuilt the walls of the coast towns, especially Jaffa, and made sallies inland as far as Banyas; he received ambassadors from the Assassins of Massiaf, and gave them presents. Joinville marveled much at these strange envoys who, he said, carried in their hands the death of kings. They complained of having to pay tribute to the Templars and Hospitalers, because they could not intimidate the soldier-monks with their daggers—if one master of the order was slain, another took his place at once.

Joinville heard the gossip of the great trade routes, and all the legends of the nearer east. He thought that Prester John ruled a Christian kingdom in the sandy wastes beyond Gog and Magog, and that the "grand cham of Tartary" had made war against Prester John. Good King Louis even sent richly illuminated Bibles and a scarlet chapel tent fittingly embroidered to the Mongol khans.

In return a gift from the Old Man of the Mountain was presented to the king—an elephant of crystal, and crystal figures of men, set in pieces of amber bordered with gold. When the casket containing this gift was opened, a strong and sweet odor spread through the chamber.

Zealously the king gathered relics from the coast shrines of the Holy Land, to bear back to France, where he had

built the Sainte Chapelle to honor the thorns and the fragment of the cross. This pleased him much and he said to Joinville:

"Seneschal, I am grieved in my heart that I shall be forced to quit such good and religious companions, to return among such a set of wretches as make up the court of Rome."

The Moslems offered to allow him to visit Jerusalem in safety, but he would not. He remembered Coeur de Lion's words, and repeated them:

"Since I can not deliver Jerusalem, I pray that I may never see the holy city."

To Queen Marguerite also the visit to the tranquil coast brought respite, and Joinville, who escorted her from place to place, found her in gay spirits. She had been delivered of another child, a daughter this time, at Jaffa.

One day in the presence of the king, I asked his leave to make a pilgrimage to Our Lady of Tortosa, which many others had done, for it was said to have been the first altar erected in honor of the Mother of God. Our Lady performed there many wonderful miracles. The king very readily gave me leave to make this pilgrimage, and at the same time charged me to buy for him a hundred-weight of different colored camlets[1] which he wished to bestow upon the Cordeliers on his return to France. From this I guessed that it would not be long before he set out on his return thither.

When I arrived at the end of my pilgrimage, I made my offering to Our Lady of Tortosa, and afterwards bought the camlets as the king had ordered. My knights, seeing me do this, asked what I wished with so many camlets. I persuaded them that I meant to gain a profit from selling them again.

The prince of that country, knowing that I had come from the king's army, gave us a most honorable reception and offered us some relics which I took to the king with his camlets.

You must know that the queen had heard that I had been on a pilgrimage and had brought back some relics. I sent her by one of my knights four pieces of the camlets which I had purchased. But when the knight entered her apartment, she cast herself on her knees before the camlets which were wrapped up in a towel.

The knight, seeing the queen do this, flung himself on his knees also.

[1]A cloth woven of camel's hair.

"Rise, Sir Knight," the queen, observing him, said, "it does not become you to kneel, who are the bearer of such holy relics."

My knight replied that it was not relics but camlets that he had brought as a present from me. When the queen and her ladies heard this, they burst into laughter.

"Sir Knight," the queen cried, "the devil take your lord for having made me kneel to a parcel of camlets."

Loath to leave the coast, the king lingered until tidings reached him of the death of his mother, Blanche, who had been regent of France during his six years' absence. Even then he hesitated, until a deputation of Syrian patriarchs and barons waited upon him, and suggested that he depart. The presence of a visitor of such distinction, at a loose end, availed them nothing, and perhaps they had become weary of the king's fervent disciplining.

"Sire, it is clear that your stay can no longer profit the Kingdom of Jerusalem. We advise you to prepare to leave in the coming Lent, so that you may have a safe passage to France."

But the passage proved to be far from safe, as Joinville observed.

On the vigil of Saint Mark, after Easter, the king and queen embarked on their ship and put to sea with a favorable wind. On the Saturday following we arrived off Cyprus. Near this island was a mountain in the sea called the Mountain of the Cross. On that day about vespers there came on such a thick fog from the land that our sailors thought themselves farther from the land than they were —for they had lost sight of this mountain.

So they sailed on, and our ship struck a sand bank below the water. A great cry rose in the ship—"Alas!"

When I heard it, I rose from my bed, and went to the ship's castle with the seamen. Brother Raymond, who was a Templar and master of the sailors, said to one, "Cast the lead!" And he did so, and cried out, "Alas, we are aground!" When Brother Raymond heard that, he tore open his clothes to the girdle, groaning, "O me!"

Then the churl who had the lead threw it out again, and came to Brother Raymond, saying that the ship was clear of the ground.

When daylight came we saw the rocks on which we should have struck if it had not been for the sand bank. In the morning the king

sent for the chief seamen of the ship, who mustered four divers—fellows who dive naked to the bottom of the sea, like fish. The captains ordered these divers to plunge into the sea, and they did so, passing under the ship.

When they came up, on the opposite side, we asked each one in turn what he had found. They all said that where our vessel had struck the sand, three fathoms of its keel had been broken off—which very much surprised the king and all who heard it. The king asked the mariners for their advice, and they replied:

"Sire, believe us, you must change from this ship to another. We know well that if the keel has suffered such damage, all the ribs of the ship must have started, and we very much fear she will be unable to bear the sea, should any wind arise."

The king, having listened to what the mariners said, summoned his council to decide what should be done, and they all agreed with the mariners. But the king called the sailors to him again, and asked them, on the faith they owed him, whether if the ship were their own and full of merchandise they would quit it.

"Sire," they replied, "it would be needful to risk our lives, to safeguard such a cargo and vessel."

"Why, then," asked the king, "do you advise me to quit her?"

"Sire," they made response, "you and we are nowise the same. For there is no sum that would compensate for the loss of yourself and the queen and her three children."

"Now," said the king, "I will tell you what I think. If I quit the ship, there are five or six hundred persons who will do likewise out of fear, and they will remain on the island of Cyprus, losing hope of returning to their own land. I will rather put myself and the queen and the children under the good providence of God."

Yet after we were saved from this peril another befell us; for there arose so great a storm that in spite of all our efforts we were driven back toward the island long after we had left it. The seamen cast out four anchors in vain, and the vessel could not be stopped until they had thrown out the fifth, which held. All the partitions of the king's cabin had to be taken down, and so high was the wind that no one dared stay therein for fear of being blown overboard.

The queen came into the king's chamber, thinking to meet him there, but found only Sir Gilles le Brun, constable of France, and myself, who were lying down. On seeing her I asked what she wished. She said she wanted the king, to beg that he might make some vows to God, that we would be delivered from this storm—for the sailors had told her we were in great danger of drowning.

"Madam," I replied, "do you vow to make a pilgrimage to my lord Saint Nicholas at Varengeville, that we may reach France in safety."

"Ah, seneschal," answered she, "I am afraid the king would not let me make such a pilgrimage."

"At least then, madam, promise the saint that if God brings you safely to France, you will give him a silver ship of the value of five marks. And for myself, I vow that I will make a pilgrimage to his shrine barefoot."

Upon this she vowed the silver ship, and demanded that I would be her pledge for the due performance of the vow, to which I assented. In a little while she came to us again to say that God, at the intercession of my lord Saint Nicholas, had delivered us from this peril. . . .

At the end of ten weeks we arrived at the port of Hieres, to the great joy of the queen. She caused the ship to be made, as she had vowed, and put within it the effigies of the king, herself, and the three children, with the sailors all in silver, with ropes of silver thread. This ship she sent me with orders to carry it to the shrine of my lord Saint Nicholas, which I did.

In this way ended the second Egyptian crusade. The *beaux sabreurs* sought their homes in France, after casting the gage of their courage against the finer weapons and superior generalship of the mamluks in vain.

And so in 1254 St. Louis came back to his native land. He was so weakened by illness that more than once Joinville had to carry him from horse to chamber in his arms. But the saintly king bore himself in defeat with the same tranquillity with which he had set out in command of his armada six years before. He sought for no explanation of his overthrow. It had been God's will.

He found France much in need of his governing hand, and for the next years he was occupied in bringing about long-cherished reforms—the famous *établissements* that, among other measures, helped replace judicial combats by trials, and granted to his people the right of appeal to their sovereign over the will of their own seigneurs. He also drove the first wedge that would in time separate the French Church from Rome.

Not so did his brother, the ambitious Charles of Anjou, occupy himself. He cast his eyes to the east, and Rome bestowed upon him the crown of the Two Sicilies, when he became the right hand of the popes and the destroyer of the last scions of the Hohenstaufen. This done, he plotted a greater dominion, to embrace the holdings of the crusaders in Greece and dominion of the sea. A taciturn and most gifted adventurer, he chafed under the leadership of a church-minded brother.

At Cairo the triumvirate ruled again, with Shadjar ad Darr the guiding spirit. Now that truce had been agreed with the French king, the mamluks released all Christian captives of war—12,100 men, and 10 women. A certain poet, As-Sahib Jamal ad Din ibn Matroub, composed in honor of the French defeat the following verses:

Bear to the lord of the French, these words which are traced by the hand of truth—

"You thought to be master of Egypt—you who are a drum filled with wind.

"And you have left your warriors on the ground of Egypt, where the tomb gaped open for them.

"Where are the seventy thousand, your men? Dead, wounded, and captive!

"If you wish again to come to Egypt, know that the house of Lokman still stands, with its chains and its eunuch awake!"[1]

[1]The house in which St. Louis was imprisoned at Mansura, under guard of the eunuch Sahil. The Moslem annals say that the king and his brother were put in chains when first taken.

PART V

When the stars set, and the old moon wanes;
When waters flow back to the lowlands—
The men of the West will be faring
Homeward again.
Far have they gone forth, and their eyes have seen:
Magicians' towers, and beacons upon the hills,
where the black banners hang.
And the fire that flies, and wind that devastates—
Earth that quivers and walls that crumble—
Old stones shaped by forgotten men, and a city
That was not built by hands.

The men of the West will be riding home, with a
broken sword in its sheath.

LII

THE TIDE EBBS

When St. Louis sailed from Acre in that year of 1254, the remnant of the last great crusade left the shore of the Holy Land. A change was taking place. The crusaders who had settled on the coast would see no more armies come out to them. They would be abandoned by Europe, to defend themselves as best they could. This change came about unheralded, because it took place in the minds of men.

It happened in this way. A century and a half before, the great tidal wave of enthusiasm had swept the first crusade down to the conquest of Jerusalem; then for a generation following waves had penetrated further into Asia, making larger the conquest.

For half a century thereafter the tide, at its full, had not moved forward or back, except a little here and there along the new frontier, until the sudden surge under Saladin's leadership had swept the crusaders back to the coast again.

Then, once more, the strong tides of men flowed out of Christendom, down to the redemption of the Holy Land, under Barbarossa and Coeur de Lion and others. But they had broken, with only a little gain, along the coast.

And, while the spirit of the crusades still held firm in Europe, other waves had been turned aside by popes and princes, to Constantinople, to the Languedoc, and Spain. One wave had lapped at Jerusalem, to serve the purpose of the great emperor Frederick II, and another had spent itself on the road of the Nile. And now St. Louis had failed again at the Nile.

The barrier of the Moslem mamluks was growing and extending, even without the leadership of a sultan such as Saladin—although the mamluks were soon to have such a leader in Baibars. But more than that, the spirit of Christendom had changed.

A century and a half ago, every man had had a share of some sort in the crusades, and the possession of Jerusalem had brought to the hamlets of Europe a new horizon, an assurance of salvation, and an outlet for pent-up spirits harassed by the suffering of the Dark Ages and eager to venture upon the new world conflict to aid the Seigneur Christ.

Now, after the mid-mark of the Thirteenth Century, things were different in Europe. Other matters engaged the attention of progressive spirits at home. For one thing, the most treasured relics had been brought out of the East, especially out of Constantinople, and at least a dozen churches could boast of guarding portions of the true Cross—to which a zealous man might make pilgrimage. And the preaching friars held the interest of the communities. The great monasteries of the previous century were beginning to disgorge their inmates, to wander forth upon the roads.

Little heeded, Friar Roger Bacon was writing his *Opus Majus* which set forth the marvels and facts of the world in clear words, and mentioned a concoction of saltpeter and sulphur and charcoal—gunpowder. Already in the universities that were growing up in the shadow of the cathedrals, youths in threadbare robes sat huddled together for warmth, or nibbled at their bread and cheese while they listened to the long expositions of the masters, who debated the new science of geography with the *dicta* of Albertus Magnus, and the reasoning of Thomas Aquinas.

Embryo scientists were testing the powers of the magnifying glass, and wondering how it might serve in the search for the philosopher's stone. Others used Arabic numerals openly in their calculations, and almost believed that the mariner's compass of the infidel Arabs might not be, in reality, a work of Satan to lead human souls astray.

The courts of the great princes were becoming gathering centers for mathematicians as well as minstrels. The minstrels on their part were singing romantic tales—the legends of King Arthur, and the fables of Alexander. They could tell, as well, of Prester John who ruled beyond the sea of sand in Asia.

Venice, enriched by the spoils of Constantinople and thriving from its sea-borne commerce, was becoming a center of the arts, wherein women appeared everywhere with men and dyed their hair red. They were avid of luxury, and what the Venetians lost in morality they gained in culture. At least they had vases of colored glass, and leaded glass for windows—henna stain for their finger tips, and the perfumes of Arabia and Cathay. They set a new fashion in Greek and colored slaves, and their husbands profited from the slave trade.

Merchant vessels—well armed, of course—plied the sea lanes that the Norse dragon ships had terrorized two centuries before. In fact Venice required that its shipyards build all vessels to standard measurements, so that they could be converted into ships of war at short notice. These ships could not be sold outside the Serene Republic, and at the end of a voyage must be returned in good condition to the arsenal. It was inevitable that Venice and Genoa should begin a long conflict for supremacy, and this was now under way.

The great princes of Europe also had their personal quarrels, in which men-at-arms were well paid, in addition to loot. It was less profitable and much more hazardous to enlist in a crusade.

In fact the crusader was growing out of joint with his time.

Evidence of that was not lacking. Even the late crusade of St. Louis had been carried on in the face of some opposition at home. The emperor Frederick had tried to head it off, and

on receiving tidings of the French king's capture at Mansura had written to the sultan of Cairo, ostensibly offering to ransom the prisoners, but actually to discover how long the king and his vassals might be held in the hands of the Moslems. In England guards had been stationed at the ports to keep would-be crusaders from embarking.

At Damietta St. Louis had almost been deserted by the Italian fleet, and at Acre the Venetians and Genoese had ignored him altogether to carry on their new war—fortifying themselves within their warehouses, and raiding each other's shipping in the port. St. Louis had appealed in vain for reinforcements from Europe.

And after his return men did not hesitate to protest against the fruitless crusade.

I have heard many say [so Joinville wrote] that those who had advised him to go upon this crusade had been guilty of a great crime and a deadly sin. So long as he remained in his kingdom of France, everything went well enough, and the people lived in peace and security; but when he left the kingdom, matters went badly.

Nor would Joinville, in spite of the love he bore St. Louis, volunteer for another crusade, in 1270.

The king of France and the king of Navarre pressed me urgently to take the cross and go upon a pilgrimage with them. But I replied that when I went beyond the sea before on the service of God, the officers of France had so grievously oppressed my people that I found them in a state of poverty from which we only recovered with difficulty. I saw clearly that if I were to undertake another crusade, my people would be ruined.

In these generations the power of the feudal barons was waning, and yielding place to the authority of the kings. Two centuries before the kings had been only nominal overlords of the barons—overshadowed in turn by the supreme authority of the emperor and the pope. Now that the concept of a single emperor had been shattered, and the prestige

of the popes had suffered, leadership lay with the kings. Nations had emerged from the welter of dukedoms and counties; frontiers had solidified, more or less.

Especially in France, in Hungary, England, and Aragon, with its twin Castile, the national mold had hardened. Italian city-republics likewise were becoming self-contained and independent. Where the crusades had passed continually through southern Germany, commercial towns were taking root. Charters were no longer a scrap of paper, and embryo parliaments made themselves heard. The power of gold also was felt, although not acknowledged. Bankers of Florence sat in the council chamber of princes.

It was no longer possible to unite the princes, the prelates, and bankers of Europe in a general crusade. And if a single monarch took the cross and voyaged over the sea, his affairs suffered and his neighbors took advantage of his absence. A new crusade meant a decisive sacrifice, and monarchs who had taken the vow to go managed to postpone the event, or have their vows commuted.

Only the Church of Rome persisted tirelessly in agitating for new crusades. Heedless of the loss of life, and the growing list of lost battles, the papal court kept at its task. Since the reign of Innocent III it had lost prestige, which it hoped to regain by recruiting new armies of the Church. To do this, it called upon the preaching friars, and organized bands of preachers to visit all the towns.

Specimen sermons were copied out, as ammunition for these sponsors of the war. Arguments, ready prepared, were furnished them, to combat the inertia of their listeners. These arguments, copied in numerous tracts, make curious reading.

They mention Constantine, the emperor who championed Christianity, and St. Helena, who was believed to have discovered the true cross, and Justinian and his wife, who found, so it was said, a treasure hidden under a marble table bearing the cross, and Archbishop Turpin, who fought so stoutly against the Moors, and the leaders of the great first crusade —Godfrey of Bouillon and Raymond and Tancred—who

by now appeared in saintly guise. The speech of Urban at Clermont was combed over for stirring phrases.

As to personal arguments, the tracts set forth that men's bodies were in reality the fief of God, to be risked for Him. That it was necessary to avenge the injury done the Holy Land by the infidels. That even the Saracens made pilgrimages to their holy places. That the crusades aided chivalry and earned salvation for the cross bearers. As for the defeats—had not God since the beginning of the world suffered poisonous weeds to grow among healthy plants?

The Church of Rome never accepted responsibility for the defeats, explaining that the military command in the crusades had been held by princes and officers outside the Church.

Now the preachers laid greater stress than ever upon material and selfish gains to be had from the crusades—special indulgences of long duration—remission of sins—protection of goods at home—freedom from payment of interest and tithes. And the preachers were told how to combat objections. If a man was held back by love of his wife—did not Eve cause the first fall of man? If he would not leave his home, was it not the vice of avarice or gluttony that restrained him? If he feared the peril of the sea, or sickness, was he not like a palfrey that ambles about the countryside while the charger goes forth to war? If he still refused to go, he might be roused by taunts of "farm fowl" or "Flanders cow"—supposed to stay all the day attached to the house by a rope—or "fresh-water fish"—that turns tail and flees from the smell of salt water.

These teams of preachers held services at altar and chapel. The master preacher would deliver his sermon, to stir the crowd. "Come, let not one of you refuse the cross, the cross that is the investiture of the esteemed kingdom desired by all men. . . ."

After that, hymns . . . *Vexilla regis* . . . "Now then, who wishes the blessing of God? Who loves the society of the angels? Who sighs for the crown incorruptible? Draw near, that you may receive the cross and obtain everything!"

Then, the collection, to be forwarded to the officers of the church. A time and place announced for the embarkation,

under so-and-so as leader. The friar, now present, would be there at the ship, to go with the cross-bearers over the sea.

So the black-robed preachers harangued the throngs, and the people of the hamlets listened, troubled in mind but obdurate. Old crusaders stood in the throngs and took no part in the service. Sometimes youths volunteered to go, or men with a burden of sin to be cleansed. But for the most part the throngs would not yield to the persuasion of the preachers. They looked stolidly on, while the women across the aisle prayed that they would not go. They thought of other processions, of black crosses carried in mourning, and the thin groups of crusaders returning from Palestine poverty ridden, the flesh wasted on their bones—perhaps bearing the scars of the plague.

Jerusalem—yes, they would like to see Jerusalem. But Saladin had swept away all the Holy Land in a single march, in the day of their great-grandfathers. Even the mighty Barbarossa and valiant Coeur de Lion and the saintly king Louis had not won it back again. Where they had failed, who could succeed?

Where had all the treasure gone, that had been poured into the alms boxes of the churches these many years? What had become of the crusaders who had never gained sight of Palestine? What had been done with the children who went off in the Italian ships?

And these Moslems, they were not servants of Evil as the monks had related in other days; they were assuredly not demons. Why attack them rather than Jews or Prussians? They no longer crossed the sea to enter Christendom. What good could come of going oversea to their lands? Let well enough alone.

So the throngs listened to the preachers of Rome, and turned away without response.

The next move came from the east, not from the west. It was no orderly crusade, but a mad and strange march from the limbo of Cathay. The Mongols rode to Jerusalem.

LIII

HULAGU AND THE KALIF

RATHER, the Mongols rode past Jerusalem. And at their coming the whole scheme of things shifted. They had appeared before, only to turn back to their deserts. Now they came to stay, and where are the words to tell of their coming?

A vast and elemental force, like the winds and the earth shakings of the world—a human power that could make its way over the barrier ranges of high Asia, and cross the barren plains—an animal-like intelligence, heedless of human suffering, avid of all that was new and precious—impulsive as a child, and still wise with the old wisdom of Cathay. Behind the warriors who overturned city walls and changed rivers in their courses, rode the mandarins who brought order out of chaos.

Behind them other hordes, in the snows of Russia and in the tiled courts of Cathay. Remote and redoubted, the Kha Khan, master of the hordes, in his nomads' court at Karakorum, ruler of the known world from Venice to Korea. Thirty caravans a day bringing him tribute that he did not trouble to count, and captive princes who prostrated themselves before

him. Couriers bearing his letters across the plains, two hundred miles in a day and as much in a night. Conjurers, jesters, harlots, ministers, and hermits thronging round his guardsmen to gain sight of him. A million soldiers obedient to his commands.

The great khan had ordered his brother Hulagu to march to the south and the east, to take possession of the lands of Islam.

So, a little after St. Louis left Acre, the horde of Hulagu Khan crossed the ranges and moved leisurely toward Baghdad, with its trains of ox carts creaking behind it, and strings of camels threading across the plains. The Mongol horsemen sat in their sheepskins upon saddles covered with cloth-of-gold—the nobles who commanded them wore sable robes covered by silver-gray wolfskins, while their reins were weighted with silver and the hilts of their weapons flamed with precious stones. In the regiments, behind the horse-tail standards or long blue banners, trotted stalwart Turks and swarthy Kirghiz, and slender Uigurs—nomad Christians who had joined the hordes. Bearded Afghans and hawk-nosed Turkomans followed the horde as jackals follow the lion when he hunts. There was even a regiment of Chinese engineers, to handle the *pao yu*, the artillery.[1]

The horde moved slowly as a juggernaut car, but as surely. It quartered itself in Khorassan and the mountain region of Persia. And there its scouts discovered the citadels of the Assassins, who had made the mistake of slaying a Mongol general. Without haste Hulagu's officers studied the mountain strongholds and negotiated with the master of the Assassins, who erred a second time when he tired to out-do them in trickery. The end of it was that the master was sent to the great khan, and was never beheld again, while Alamut and his other eyries were besieged methodically and torn to pieces.

[1]The Mongols learned the use of gunpowder from the Chinese, who manufactured it long before the Europeans. It is often said that the Chinese were aware of the fusive effect of gunpowder, but not of its detonating properties. This is not the case. They exploded powder in cumbersome bombs, and in a kind of mortar, to terrify hostile cavalry. They also used it in mines. But they did not make serviceable cannon until taught by Europeans three or four centuries later.

That was the last of the Old Man of the Mountain and his order, in the mountains of Persia.

The horde settled down before Baghdad, and the last of the kalifs penned himself behind his walls, closing his gates against the pagan invaders. Baghdad was stormed and sacked so remorselessly that all the peoples of Islam heard the tidings with terror.

The kalif was smothered to death under carpets, and with him vanished the splendor of the court of Baghdad.

This done, the horde separated and overcame resistance elsewhere. The amir of Mosul rendered submission to them; the Seljuks were driven before them into the north of Asia Minor and ceased to play a part in affairs thereafter. Damascus yielded, and Aleppo was stormed and its citadel dismantled.

Before this the Armenian king Haython had journeyed to Mangu, the great khan, and not only made his peace but an alliance with the pagans. Bohemund VI, prince of Antioch, shared in this alliance, paying a small tribute to the Mongols.

Mangu, the great khan, heard Haython's appeal, and announced that the Mongols would support the Christians in Syria and Armenia. The khan added that he was sending his brother Hulagu to cast down the kalif and to restore Jerusalem.

Hulagu's secretaries sent a letter to St. Louis, saying:

"We have many Christians among our people. We are come with authority and power to announce that all Christians are to be freed from servitude and taxes in Moslem lands, and are to be treated with honor and reverence. No one is to molest their goods, and whatever churches have been destroyed are to be rebuilt, and are to be allowed to sound their plates."

When they entered Damascus, the Mongols turned over to the Christians[1] several mosques that had once been churches.

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[1]It must not be forgotten that in nearly all the Moslem lands there were native Christians—Kopts, Syrians, Armenians, and Georgians. These were more or less oppressed, and the Mongol inroad did more to free them than all the efforts of the

When they entered northern Syria in 1259, the year after the fall of Baghdad, there was rejoicing among the native Christians. An angered Muhammadan wrote:

"Every religious sect proclaims its faith openly, and no Moslem dares disapprove. Every Christian, whether of the common people or the highest, has put on his finest garments and gone forth to sing."

A spasm of unlooked-for hope seized Europe. The terrible horde had retired from the Danube a generation before, and now the benevolent horde was approaching the Jordan. This might be a new miracle.

Already Innocent IV and St. Louis had sent preaching friars to the desert city of Karakorum in the Gobi, and the Mongols had sent them back with scrupulous care. The friars had not managed to convert the great khan, but they had found him human and amiable. And they had found besides throngs of Nestorian Christians—converts of the disciplies of the early days of Christianity who had held to their faith although isolated for a thousand years—in the Far East. The great khan tolerated all religions, but he was angered by the Muhammadans with whom he was then at war, and friendly to the Christians. Moreover, he sent letters to the pope, and asked for ambassadors and a group of philosophers to visit him and teach him.

And now his brother, Hulagu, who had overrun the heart of Islam, sought contact with the crusaders in the Holy Land.

The Armenians exulted in the alliance their king Haython had made with the master of the horde; wild tales passed from hamlet to hall—that the kingdom of Prester John had been discovered at last in the East—that the magicians of Cathay had appeared in fire and smoke.

The Venetians insinuated themselves into the good graces of the conquerors, and the two elder Polos, Messrs Nicolo

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crusaders. By this time there were also thousands of captive crusaders and their offspring.

These lost crusaders seldom appear in the pages of history. Some were ransomed by the military orders; some trickled back to Europe overland—there is a highway in the Caucasus known to this day as the Road of the Crusaders. But most of them were submerged in the flux of the Near East and survive only in legends and tales told to travelers. Several times the present writer ran across such legends in Syria.

and Maffeo, prepared to set out to Cathay. Voyagers thronged into the long road that led past Samarkand to the East. It was a day of miracles in which anything could happen.

The Templars, watching events with appraising eyes, begged the European courts urgently to make peace with Egypt. In the crisis the three military orders buried their quarrels of the past and made common cause to defend themselves on their strip of coast. They besought Rome to bring about a binding military alliance with the Mongols.

But the papal *Curia*, involved in civil war and passing from one interregnum to another, did nothing—except to send out two other preaching friars. The golden opportunity was lost, and to make matters worse, Rome still sounded the trumpet blast of war against the mamluks, thus neglecting the Mongols, antagonizing Egypt, and sacrificing the crusaders on the coast of the Holy Land.

Only the Mongols could have restored Jerusalem to the Christians. And when Hulagu Khan was at the threshold of Palestine in 1259 he had tidings of the death of the great khan Mangu. By the old custom of the horde, he was forced to return at once to Karakorum, taking his army with him.

Haython prevailed upon him before his departure to leave a single division of 10,000 horsemen under Ketbogha, to hold Syria. Either because the Armenians persuaded him, or because Ketbogha wished to carry on the campaign himself, this division of the horde rode down through Palestine, past Jerusalem, driving the Moslems from Hebron and Bait-Jebrail.

So, at the southern end of Palestine, the Mongols came face to face with the outposts of the mamluks.

Before then the horde had sent an ominous message to Cairo. "These are the words of Him who rules the earth—tear down your walls and submit. If you do so, peace will be granted you. If you do otherwise, that will happen which will happen, and what it is to be we know not. God alone knows."

Cairo was divided between anger and fear of the Mongols. Most of the mamluks favored submission, but Baibars called for war—himself a Tatar escaped from the Golden Horde.

When Hulagu departed for the Gobi, Baibars prevailed upon the sultan to advance against Ketbogha. To make certain of war, he had the Mongol envoys put to death.

There followed, in 1260, the Battle of Ain Jalut near Gaza. The host of the mamluks met Ketbogha's division, and the Mongols, without support of any kind, weakened by the great heat and outnumbered, were broken and driven north, out of Palestine, and through Syria.

Baibars, exulting in his victory, pressed forward without respite. Ketbogha was slain, and the scattered horsemen of the horde in their strange bronze breastplates and dark enameled helmets, their horses weighted down by leather housing, passed with their yak-tail banner beneath the walls of Hebron, by the gray, deserted cathedral of Bethlehem, through the gorge of the Jordan—as the wrack of thorn-bush and dust flies before the wind storm of the plains. Like the whirling wind of the desert, they sped over the dry lands of beyond-Jordan—they swam the Euphrates, and vanished before the black banners of the mamluks.

Baibars, in his pursuit, captured Damascus for his sultan, and overrode the country as far as Aleppo.

For the first time since the triumph of Genghis Khan, the Mongol horsemen had met their match. The real test of strength between the riders of the Gobi and the slave-warriors of Cairo was still to come; but in this lightning rush of events in the year 1260, Hulagu had passed from the scene, taking with him the hope of a Mongol conquest of Jerusalem, and Baibars had appeared in his place. Jerusalem now belonged to the mamluks.

And Baibars wrote *finis* to the year in his own fashion. Expecting the province of Aleppo as reward for his victory, he was disappointed by his sultan. Straightway he killed his overlord, and was himself proclaimed sultan of Cairo, Father of Victory and Pillar of the Faith.

It is time, and more than time, to look at Baibars, the Panther, who had in this typically spectacular manner arrived at the summit of his ambition.

LIV

THE PANTHER LEAPS

It is strange that the character who comes out before the curtain of this final act of the crusades should have been a clown. A gorgeous and sinister Pagliacci, who sang his own *prologo* and shook with inextinguishable laughter even when he crept across the stage with dagger drawn.

No doubt he appears mad, but he is not. He plays the tricks of a clown to amuse himself, but he is not a clown. He is delighted because he has driven the horsemen of the horde like wild mares across the stage at his entrance, yet it pleases him better to disappear altogether from our sight. He is quite capable of coming on again as a beggar or a wandering crossbowman, or a solitary feaster at a banquet—and woe to the fellow player who gives his identity away. He is, in brief, a true actor of the East that we have never understood, and he is a great actor. One of his audience, the friar William of Tripoli, said that, as a soldier, he was not inferior to Julius Caesar, nor did he yield in malignity to Nero.

Look at him in his natural person, and you will behold a giant in stature, his hair red, his broad face sun darkened; one eye blue, the other whitened by the scar that blinded it;

all of his six feet clad in the colored silks, the velvet vest and wide girdle cloth, the gold-inlaid armor pieces, the black-and-gold *khalat*, the turban-wound helmet of a mamluk who was also sultan. His left hand is his sword hand.

Consider his past—a Tatar of the Golden Horde, a desert-bred fighter, sold at Damascus for a slave at a price of about ninety dollars and returned on account of the blemish in his eye. He called himself the Crossbowman when he joined the roistering White Slaves of the River and became a leader of men who were intolerant of leaders.

Probably Baibars himself could not have named over the full list of his battles. We know that he helped wipe out the crusaders at Gaza in 1244, that he was one of Pearl Spray's triumvirate, and that his counter-attack at Mansura broke the heart of St. Louis and overthrew the chivalry of France. Alone, he set himself across the path of the great khan and defeated a Mongol army. With his own hand he wounded one sultan of Egypt and slew another. His soldiers spoke of him as Malik Dahir, the Triumphant King.

But he is really the Commander of the Faithful, the good kalif of the Thousand and One Nights. True, the name in the tales is that of Haroun the Blessed; the deeds, however, are Baibars'. He, not the cold and cautious Haroun of two centuries before, feasted gigantically and passed his days in disguise among his people; he appointed porters to be princes, and made princes into porters to gratify a whim; he assembled the fairest girls of that part of the world, to add variety to his harem. Eventually a Christian woman of Antioch became his favorite wife.

The real scene of the Thousand and One Nights is not Baghdad but Cairo.[1] The river with its pleasure barges rowed by slaves is the Nile, not the Tigris. The unruly slaves are the mamluks.

[1]The origin of the tales known as the Arabian Nights is, of course, Indian and Persian to a great extent. The name and some incidents of the life of Haroun ar Raschid, kalif of Baghdad, have been added by the story tellers. But scholars have made certain that the collection of the tales centered in Cairo, and that the deeds attributed to Haroun are really Baibars' for the most part. For one thing, the coarse humor and the comedy are Egyptian, not Arabian. And the references to Christian knights and crusaders belong to Baibars' day.

Among the many rôles played by Baibars that of the sultan-in-disguise appealed most to the fancy of his people. Incognito, with his cup companions, he would raid the public baths to carry off the choicest women. Unattended, he would mount his horse and go off, to appear the next day in Palestine—on the fourth day in the Arabian desert. He had all a Tatar's ability to ride far and fast. He played court tennis at Damascus, and—eight hundred miles away—at Cairo in the same week. He would ride in at the triple gate of Aleppo's gray citadel when the garrison believed him feasting on the Nile.

His counselors were not enlightened as to his plans—or else their noses were led to the wrong scent. For all his Moslems knew, their sultan might be listening at their elbow, or at sea a thousand miles away—the building of a new fleet was one of his pet projects. He might be a tall mamluk sitting his horse under a gate, or a tall antelope hunter out with leopards beyond the sheep pastures, or a tall stranger from Persia rocking in prayer at the elbow of the kadi reading from the Koran in the chief mosque. His people took pains not to identify him, because Baibars, incognito, would cut off the head of a man who salaamed to him or cried his name in a moment of forgetfulness. They dreaded his coming, even while they listened exultingly to the growing tale of his exploits—and shivered with terror.

Baibars was a sultan after their own hearts. The story teller of the bazaar corner and the blind man sitting in the sun of the mosque courtyard were his minstrels. Who could relate the full tale of his daring? Or his zeal for Islam? Or his championship of the holy war? The Thousand and One tales grew up around him, but they did not relate the whole.

He had Saladin's secret of victory, and he became as strict a Moslem as the son of Ayub—although in his private excursions he allowed himself license enough. He closed the wine shops and burned the stores of hashish, but secretly he drank the fermented mare's milk of the Tatars. What Saladin had accomplished by will power, and Richard of England had

achieved by nervous energy, the Panther surpassed by sheer abounding vitality.

He joined in the archery tests of his mamluks, and outdid them; he wielded his cane spear in the jousting field, and overthrew them; he hastened to the polo field; he hunted with leopards during a march, and his horses won the races. He surrounded his gigantic person with all the splendor of a conqueror—with Viceroy, Master of the Horse, Lord of the Drums, Grand Huntsman, Polo-bearer, Slipper-holder, Lord of the Chair, and all the fellowship of the black eunuchs. Horns and drums heralded his approach, when he played his public rôle of sultan. To soldiers who caught his fancy, he gave emeralds or Christian girls or estates in Damascus, as the fancy struck him. At a suspicion of revolt he beheaded 180 lords of Cairo.

And yet he had a canny sense of finance. In the first days of his sultanate he reduced all taxes, while he met his enormous expenditures by levies on conquered territory. He built hospitals out of tribute paid by brothels, then he closed the brothels—although he kept boys around him for his own amusement. He gleaned money for his fleet by raiding the Italian merchantmen, and then forced Venice and Genoa—he delighted in playing one off against the other—to pay high for the privileges of the Egyptian ports.

He could be a most able administrator when he chose. Letters brought to his headquarters were answered within the day, and the answers dictated to his secretaries went out swiftly by pigeon post, galloper, and fast galley. Language was no barrier to this much-traveled tyrant; and when his secretaries were brought to despair by one of his long absences, he would be apt to dismount at his headquarters and come in upon them unannounced, to work through the night hours over communications in Greek, Arabic, Margrabian, Turkish. He exchanged letters and ambassadors with Charles of Anjou and the Venetians, with the Spanish kings and Conradin, the last of the Hohenstaufen.

By spies and merchants and friends among the Europeans, he kept his finger on events, knowing that Germany was

divided in civil war, Italy prostrate after the long strife between the emperor and pope, and the French crusaders driven from Constantinople at last. He worked steadily and effectively to isolate the crusaders in Syria from their people in Europe.

The Panther had two ambitions—to defeat the Mongol khans, and to drive the crusaders out of the East. And, as Saladin had done, he called for the jihad, the holy war against the infidels.

Meanwhile—for Baibars had too much common sense to make war in haste—he carried out certain preparations of his own. To discourage another crusade by sea, he blocked up the Damietta channel with rocks and moved the city itself back up the river; he built signal towers along the coast, organized a relay pigeon post between Cairo and Damascus.

To strengthen his frontiers, and to add to his treasury, he seized Damascus treacherously, accusing its lord of allying himself with the Mongols. Including the Armenians in this accusation, he marched north and ravaged the hill castles that had been secure even in Saladin's wars. With throngs of captives, and an Armenian prince, and camel trains of spoil, he left the mountain ranges and the ruins of the castles smoking behind him. To impress Christian and Assassin envoys who visited him during this march, he mutilated and then put to death 500 Armenian captives.

To his men, on the eve of the jihad, he issued a proclamation that Napoleon might have given out before a new campaign:

"The king of the French, the king of England, the emperor of Germany, and the Roman emperor have marched against us aforetime. They have vanished like a storm chased by the wind. May they come again! May he come, the king Charles, and the Greek with him—and even the Mongol. We will enrich ourselves with their treasures, and will be glorified as victors in the holy war."

In spite of this challenge, Baibars did not wish to call down upon his head a general crusade. He kept his fingers on the pulse of Europe through the Venetians, who now frankly made alliances with the Moslems; and he kept an

eye on the doings of the Mongols in Persia through his spies. He had set his heart on clearing the crusaders from the coast of the Holy Land—which Saladin had not been able to accomplish—and he planned deftly to do this without rousing Europe to a new crusade.

To march against the formidable knights who had been strengthening their network of castles from Jaffa to Antioch was a task calling for the utmost care and skill. Glory was to be had, of course, in driving out the infidels, but hard knocks and little spoil as well. Baibars did not underestimate his foes in the slightest.

He wanted, of course, to round out his new empire by clearing the coast. But, more than that, he looked upon this task as a duty. Pagliacci had a soul, under all the paint and pantomime.

During his peregrinations Baibars had examined most of the crusader citadels, and he knew the ground thoroughly. Some thirty fortified points confronted him, ranging from huge Antioch, with its hundred thousand motley inhabitants, to the Krak des Chevaliers, with its enormous walls and population of soldiers, to small citadels of the sea like Tyre, and isolated towers garrisoned by a few Templars or Hospitalers.

He understood that the crusaders were no longer able to put an army in the field against him—unless a new crusade should be launched. So he made his plans to strike at the citadels, one at a time, by swift thrusts that depended upon surprise and weight of numbers and power of siege engines for rapid success. Like Hannibal, he had a varied but devoted host behind him, made up of trained mamluks, Berber and Arab levies, with the negroes of the Sudan. Such a force, even more than Saladin's, was formidable in victory but undependable when checked for any time. And Baibars had all a Tatar's instinct for secrecy and swiftness of action.

The crusaders knew when he led his army from Cairo for the first blow in 1265. Baibars marched rapidly north from Jerusalem, and they were watching for him around Acre when his black standards suddenly appeared before the small walled town of Caesarea in the south. His mamluks stormed

the outer wall, and set up their siege engines—brought up in pieces on camel and mule back—before the citadel, which held out for a week. The Panther turned over the castle to his men to plunder, while he worked with his own hands at razing the fortifications.

He had determined to destroy all the cities on the coast which had been rallying points for the crusaders. While two divisions of his cavalry overran Haifa and menaced Château Pèlerin just north of the lost Caesarea, Baibars turned south with his infantry and siege engines and invested Arsuf.

The knights, watching from the parapet while the Moslems set up their camp, noticed a solitary mamluk, a tall figure in a long coat of mail that hung to his ankles and carrying a shield, walking without haste between the lines. The Moslems did not point at the wanderer, or display any interest in him while he inspected the foundation stones of the wall and the gate towers. Nor did the knights observe that he had one blue eye and one white eye.

They did see him presently, working the siege engines; and when after a month Arsuf surrendered, they discovered him to be the sultan. Baibars made the captives pull down the walls stone by stone, and—in spite of his promise to free them—paraded them in triumph into Cairo with their banners reversed and broken crosses hanging from their necks.

It was his way of bringing the fruit of the jihad to Cairo. And in the next year he had bloodier tokens to show—for the hill castle of Safed was beset, and when its weary Templars surrendered they were put to death, all but one who turned Moslem and one who was spared to carry the tidings of the massacre to the remaining strongholds of the crusaders.

To the exulting mamluks, who had seen three citadels fall to them, this was a sign of victory. The end of the unbelievers was written in the Book of Fate, and what was written would come to pass. They felt assured that they were the instruments of fate, destined to reap with their swords the final harvest of Christian lives that would atone for all the past.

They did not realize that Baibars had blooded them carefully upon three of the weakest strongholds, and by so doing

had intimidated the other citadels. While the crusaders appealed for armed aid from Haython, the Mongols, and Europe, Baibars consented to take 15,000 pieces of gold from Bohemund VI of Antioch, for a truce, while he went north to punish Haython for daring to support the Mongols.

A tale is told that he wandered incognito into the far-distant country of Asia Minor, where at a roadside pastry shop he dismounted to eat fruit and cake. When he went out of the shop, he left his ring on a table. After he rejoined his army he sent a courier to the Mongol Il-khan, explaining that he had lost his signet ring in a certain pastry shop belonging to the khan and asking that it be returned to him.

Even on the path of war, Baibars would have his jest. He was vastly amused, no doubt, the next year, when he heard that the Venetians and Genoese—their feud being then at its height—had fought a naval battle off the coast of the Holy Land. But he heard also that St. Louis, informed of the situation in Palestine, had taken the cross again and was assembling his second great crusade.

LV

A LETTER TO BOHEMUND

The news spurred Baibars to make his real effort in the following spring—1268. In March he appeared without warning before the gates of Jaffa, the only town remaining to the crusaders in the south. He stormed it, tore it down, and sent its marble columns back to Cairo to enrich a new mosque, the Dahira. These massive marbles had been shaped by skilled Greek hands in forgotten times; now, seized by the eager hands of ragged *fellahis*, they were reared into place within the courtyard of baked clay while the human swarms of the alleys and the ragged watermen of the Nile chanted in admiration of the work of the Triumphant King.

Baibars, with his armored horsemen, his creaking carts and camel trains, with his silk-clad negroes herding captive crusaders in chains, with frantic dervishes screaming an endless song of victory, climbed to the cold Lebanon and set up his engines before Belfort. The castle that had defied Saladin held out for only ten days, and the sultan's eunuchs had new captives to scourge along the road.

Then the army went down to graze its horses and to reap

the harvest of the fields of Banyas where the waters of the Jordan come to the surface of the earth beneath a red cliff. And Baibars disappeared.[1]

A day or so later a party of envoys from the sultan entered the double gate of Tripoli's castle, and demanded speech with Bohemund VI, whom they called the count. They were led to the upper courtyard, where knights and men-at-arms gathered round them, and Bohemund made his appearance on a tower stairway. He had come down from his city of Antioch—that his ancestor, the first Bohemund, had wrested from the Turks nearly two centuries before. And two centuries of luxury, surrounded by Greeks and served by Syrians, had left their mark on the prince of Antioch who was Norman only in lineage. He had bought a peace from Baibars, but still, being fearful, he had journeyed south to Tripoli, his other city, to watch events.

The leader of the Egyptian envoys spoke to him boldly, addressing him as Count Bohemund, and accusing him of breaking the terms of the truce.

But Bohemund still had something of Norman pride, and he whispered to his chamberlain, who upbraided the envoys. "Shape better your tongues or be silent. It is well known to all men that my lord is prince of Antioch, and by that title must you address him."

The mamluk who was leader of the envoys glanced about him covertly and hesitated. Then he shook his head.

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[1]The amazing speed of the Panther's movements, as well as his genius for deception, rendered him invisible to the eyes of the harassed crusaders.

In this spring he was before Jaffa, 7 March—then superintended the rebuilding of Hebron with its great mosque—at Belfort, 5 April—Banyas, 25 April—arranged for a new patrol and courier system (a kind of mounted police and pony express combined) to be carried out by the nomad Turkomans—in Tripoli in disguise, 1 May—captured Antioch, 15 May.

Antioch is some 500 miles from Jaffa by road. Baibars took Jaffa in 12 hours and Antioch in 30. Such maneuvering fairly outdid Saladin's greatest efforts. It took Saladin months to reduce Belfort, and three days to capture the outer wall of Jaffa, and he never ventured to besiege Antioch.

Baibars' rapidity of movement equaled some of the marches of Genghis Khan and Tamerlane. It must be remembered that he had Tatars and central Asia Turks under him—he was one of the spectacular leaders of the new influx from mid-Asia that overwhelmed the hard-fighting crusaders, and—in the next century—swept over their lines into Europe itself.

"Thus was the message given me, to *Al Komas*, the Count. And not otherwise may I say what was said to me."

The brow of the prince darkened, and he signed to his men-at-arms to surround the Moslems and seize them. As he did so one of them, a tall groom who had been holding the horses, wandered over to the leading mamluk. In so doing the groom touched the officer's foot, and the mamluk spoke at once to Bohemund.

"*Yah Brens*—O Prince, content ye!"

The point was yielded by the Moslems, and their message delivered. While the talk went on, the tall groom continued his wanderings round the courtyard, staring up with his one good eye at the walls, at the weapons of the garrison, and at Bohemund himself. When the prince of Antioch dismissed his visitors, the groom neglected to hold the stirrups of the mamluks. He mounted a charger himself and rode off among them. And outside the gate of the town, he rocked in the saddle, roaring with laughter.

"To the devil with all countships and princedoms!" he cried.

Baibars had added the part of a groom to his other rôles, and the experience amused him vastly. Perhaps it suggested to him what followed, or perhaps he had already planned it out. He disappeared again from the valley below Banyas, but this time he took the pick of his army with him.

Two weeks later, at the end of May, a letter arrived at the castle of Tripoli for Bohemund. It was brought by an unarmed Moslem—not the sultan in disguise this time—who disappeared after it was taken from him.

Bohemund, opening the missive, beheld at the foot of it Baibar's heavy signature. And when he had read it through he sat without moving or speaking, as if stunned by an unseen blow. When his companions knew the contents of the letter, amazement and sorrow kept them silent. The letter was the masterpiece of the versatile sultan.

"Greeting to the Count," it began. "And commiseration upon his misfortune, inflicted by Allah, who hath deprived him of his princedom and left to him for consolation only his countship. Know, O Count, thou who believest thyself to

be prince of Antioch art not—for WE are lord of Antioch, thy rich and fruitful city.

"Sword in hand, we swept through thy city on the fourth hour of Saturday, the fourth day of Ramadan. If thou hadst seen thy knights rolled under the hoofs of our horses! Thy palaces trampled by the plunderers who filled their bags with booty! Thy treasures weighed out by the heaviest weights! Thy fair women hawked in the streets at four for a dinar—and bought with thine own gold!

"If thou hadst seen thy churches broken in, their crosses shattered, their lying gospels tossed from hand to hand in the open under the sun, the tombs of thy noble forefathers overturned, while thy foe the Moslems trod upon thy Holy of Holies, slaughtering monks and priests and deacons like sheep, leading out the rich to misery, and nobles of thy blood to slavery!

"Couldst thou have seen the flames licking up thy halls—thy dead cast into the flames temporal while the flames eternal awaited them—the churches of the Apostles rocking and going down . . . Then wouldst thou have said, '*O God, that I were dust!*'

"Since no man of thine hath escaped to tell thee the tale, I TELL IT THEE!"

In this way the Panther ended the dispute as to whether Bohemund was prince or count.

He had written only the truth. His horsemen surprised the great city, and stormed the hastily guarded wall that had been thought impregnable, and the gardens of the crusaders were drenched in the blood of a fearful massacre. Eight thousand souls crowded into the citadel on the height above Antioch, and these were granted their lives.

The Moslems snatched from the burning city spoil almost beyond counting—gold was tallied by the vase-full, and young girl slaves were handed about among the camelmen for five dirhems a head. The blow had fallen like lightning from a fair sky, and within a week Antioch was populated only by swarms of merchants and thieves, grubbing in the ruins and bargaining for spoil in the markets.

In the south, the crusaders heard the tidings with incredu-

lity. But—except for the unfortunate Bohemund—it affected them little, since Antioch had grown apart from the Holy Land generations before. They waited anxiously to learn where Baibars would strike next—he had lopped off the extreme south and the north of their line of citadels that year.

But in the next spring—1269—Baibars contented himself with some grim maneuvers. He vanished for a while, allowing the report to be sent forth that he was dead. Apparently he had been criticized for his treachery in breaking his treaties with the Christians, and wished in this way to trick them into giving him cause for a fresh invasion.

Twice he failed to surprise the black stronghold of Marghab, held by the Hospitalers. Once he materialized without armor and with forty horsemen on the summit of the hill of the Krak, under the castle walls. He challenged the knights to come out to individual combat, and rode off again. He harvested the fields of the knights and staged a small triumph ornamented with Christian heads in Damascus. But in reality he was holding his army in readiness to meet the crusade of St. Louis.

The energetic sultan, however, did more than await the coming of the French king. On learning the numbers and strength of the crusade—which included the forces of Charles of Anjou, the chivalry of Navarre, and a small contingent of English led by their prince Edward—he attempted to turn it aside and succeeded.

At Baibars' urging, the Moslem lord of Tunis wrote to St. Louis that he was prepared to aid the crusaders against the sultan, and inviting them to land upon the African coast in his territory. He sent also a large sum of money to prove his good faith. Just how the intrigue was carried out, and how the king was induced to sail to Tunis, is not known.[1]

[1]It is said that his brother, Charles of Anjou, then king of the Two Sicilies, persuaded him to land at Tunis to conquer that coast for the French arms and to rid the neighboring sea of the troublesome Moslem pirates. But it seems evident that Charles joined the crusade reluctantly since it forced him to abandon his own plans in the East. Many others embarked without enthusiasm, being constrained to join the crusade by the devout king. It was purely a personal undertaking on the part of St. Louis and was abandoned at once after his death.

Suffice it that he went thither, as Baibars had desired, in July, 1270.

Landing in that time of heat and dust, after the country had been desolated by a famine, St. Louis found that the amir of Tunis had betrayed him, and that the Moslems were in arms against him. The crusaders pressed the siege of the white-walled city, above the stagnant salt marshes, in spite of the dust storms that swept through their camps, and the bad water, and the harrying of the Berber clans who rode down from the southern hills.

Beholding them so situated, a poet of Tunis recalled the poem of victory sung at Cairo twenty years before, and he wrote:

O King of France, thou wilt find this land a sister of Egypt: prepare thee for what fate hath in store for thee here.

Thou wilt find here the tomb, in place of the house of Lokman; and thy eunuch here will be the Angel of Death!

Fate added the gift of prophecy to the wit of the Moslem singer. Within a month the plague made its appearance in the Christian host, and the king was afflicted with his son who had been born in the stress of the terrible days at Damietta—and who was now entering manhood.

They carried the weakening St. Louis out to the shore, near the hills where once Carthage had reared its walls. Here, under the scattered eucalyptus and cedars, a breath of cool air came in from the sea. The king and his son lay on blankets, stretched on the brown wisps of dead grass and poppies under open pavilions.

The servants of the Church ministered to them, but could not check the plague in the bodies weakened by dysentery. The son died before the father. And the day came when the thin form of the king turned on its side, and his voice was heard:

"God have mercy on these, Thy people . . . lead them to safety in their own land . . . O Jerusalem! Jerusalem!"

Within a week the height over the red bluff was deserted.

The crusaders had left, taking with them the body of their dead king.

The Arab shepherds and the brown sheep returned to the shore, the muezzins called from the small towers in the white-walled villages. The warriors of the tribes rode in, to look at the remnants of the crusaders' camps, and lean dervishes pointed out the spot where St. Louis had died.

So the crusade came to its end in vain—the last of the great crusades.

Such were the tidings that reached Cairo, and filled Baibars with infinite satisfaction. He himself had seen St. Louis in chains at Mansura, and now—thanks to the trap he had set for him at Tunis—the great king of the crusaders was being carried to his tomb. The fire of the jihad seized upon the men of Cairo anew, and Baibars decided to break down the strongest outpost of the knights in the Holy Land.

In the spring, 1271, he led his terrible siege circus against the Krak des Chevaliers, the headquarters of the Hospitalers. For more than a century this square citadel of white stone had crowned the bare hills at the edge of the Assassin country. Unchallenged, even by Saladin, it had guarded approach to the Templar's little town of Tortosa and Tripoli on the coast.

Two weeks after Baibars set up his engines on the plateau where the stone aqueduct runs into the southern bastions of the Krak, the mighty citadel drew down its banners and surrendered, the surviving knights being allowed to go forth with their lives.[1]

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[1]Baibars' invariable success in these sieges was due to the Mongol siege tactics he adopted. He had, of course, the best of engines, and from the moment of his arrival on the scene the attack was pressed, the fanatical Moslems making assaults at all hours while the engines opened a gap in the walls. The defenders were obliged to remain under arms constantly, harassed by smoke bombs and flame throwers. No aid could be expected from outside, and by now a sally was impossible in the face of Baibars' numbers.

By 1270, the sultan's army had been modeled on the Mongol units, with adaptations of his own. His household mamluks, Bahriyah mamluks and *halka* (Guard) of 10,000 each formed the regulars, and they were divided in turn into (a) experienced cavalry (b) swordsmen on foot (c) reserve (d) recruits still under test.

His war levies consisted of the Nouwair Arabs, Bedawins, Arabs from Irak and

Baibars repaired the damage done to the walls, and placed an inscription with his name and the date of the capture upon one of the towers. He intended to use the great fortress as a base for future operations against the coast. And he wrote to Hugh of Revel, commander of the Hospitalers, announcing his achievement:

"To Brother Hugh. We will make clear to thee what God hath just now done for us. Thou didst fortify this place, and didst trust the guard of it to the choicest of thy brethren. Well! Thou hast done nothing but hasten their deaths, and their deaths will be thy loss."

The Panther was now the neighbor of his victim, Bohemund, formerly prince of Antioch and now merely count of Tripoli. With his mamluks, the sultan raided the fields of Tripoli, gathering in crops and fruits and sugar cane.

Bohemund, shut up within his castle at Tripoli, made the natural mistake of protesting that Baibars had broken the truce for which the count had paid anew. Baibars was not at loss for a reply.

"Nay, I have come only to gather in thy harvests, and the vintages of thy vines. By God, I hope to pay thee a like visit each year!"

Bohemund could do nothing but keep to the shelter of his castle, and later in the summer he received a second message from the Panther. The bearer of it brought also some heads of game which he said were a gift from the sultan to the count. The second message was brief as the first:

"The rumor runs that thou hast renounced the chase, and

Yamen—about 40,000. And the Hawwarah of high Egypt—20,000—a division of Turkomans from the Aleppo region, and Kurds—10,000.

Only a portion of the levies and the regular army were in the field as a rule. The sultan's circus numbered perhaps two full divisions, but outnumbered the crusader garrisons ten to one. The wonder is not that the citadels fell so quickly, but that they were defended at all. The Templars and Hospitalers, with a few Teutonic Knights, were the only military units now in the Holy Land; they were all in garrison, and they could not have mustered between them 10,000 men.

Baibars could at need put nearly 100,000 men in the field. His successor, Kalawun, in 1280, met a Mongol and Christian army of 80,000 with superior numbers.

After Baibars' day, if not before, the military supremacy passed from the West to the East, where the Mongols were now at home. It did not return to the West for three centuries, and then largely by virtue of superior fire weapons.

darest not stir out of thy town. So we send thee these heads of game to console thee."

Baibars, however, had not lingered near Tripoli. Swiftly he marched south with his circus and captured Montfort, the stronghold of the Teutonic Knights on the breast of the hills within sight of Acre. After taking it, he decided to raze it to the ground, and the stout walls were pulled down, the stones scattered in the gorge.

Baibars' captures, apparently haphazard, had been methodical. First he had cleared the Palestine coast, as far as the strong point of Château Pèlerin; then he had swept over north Syria, seizing Antioch and the rich cultivated lands and the caravan roads to the coast. Then he had cleared the crusaders from their last citadels in the line of the hills, so that only narrow strips of coast at Acre and Tripoli remained to them, and they had, actually, their backs to the sea. They could not ride inland for a half hour without coming among the Moslems.[1]

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[1]They still held Marghab, overlooking the sea, and Tortosa, Sidon, and Tyre, with Château Pèlerin—the last three being actually built out into the sea. But these were isolated, and Baibars left them to be dealt with later, when he had built up his fleet. It happened that his ships of war were caught off Cyprus in a storm just then, and destroyed.

Evidence of Baibars' treatment of the captured strongholds remains to-day, after seven centuries and a half. His plan was to destroy the coast ports, accessible to the crusaders, and keep intact the hill citadels, to serve the Moslems. Of the places he razed—Ascalon, Caesarea, Arsuf, and Montfort—hardly a trace of the crusaders' buildings remains. While the Krak, that he repaired, is almost intact and his memorial tablet distinct to-day. Belfort also is half preserved.

The present writer, in his visit to Antioch, Aleppo, and Damascus, examined the ruins of the majority of the crusaders' citadels. Their present condition is explained in a note at the end of the book.

LVI

ASIA SENDS FORTH ITS HORDE

One man alone answered their appeals for aid. Edward, prince of England, had taken the cross and, with a few hundred adventurous knights and men-at-arms, joined the crusade of St. Louis—arriving at Tunis after the death of the king, when the other lords were preparing to sail home. This Edward would not do. Having taken the cross, he meant to carry out his vow.

"By the blood of God," he swore, "I shall go to Acre if all others leave me but Fowr my valet."

With his princess, Eleanor, and his small following, he landed in the port of Acre in time to hear of the loss of the Krak. Unable to take the field against the sultan, he had to content himself with short raids inland, which troubled Baibars enough to turn his attention to the young English crusader.

In Edward's case, Baibars chose to draw the dagger, not the sword—and that treacherously. Either he enlisted the aid of the Assassins, or he hired murderers from Jaffa who passed themselves off as Assassins. They penetrated the

English camp with the usual throngs of hangers-on and assailed the prince in his tent. Taken by surprise, Edward defended himself valiantly, seizing and wrestling with the Moslems, until aid came to him. He was wounded in the arm and side, and the weapons of the murderers seem to have been poisoned.

His wounds became infected, and he lay prostrate in his tent, cared for by his youthful wife and apparently doomed to a slow death by blood poisoning. No surgeon of that time could operate in such a case, but Eleanor never ceased her ministrations. The chronicle relates that when her husband slept she lay by his side and licked the rankling wounds with her tongue, until they closed. They who beheld her doing so expected her to be stricken, but she received no hurt.

At the end of a year, in which all his efforts could accomplish nothing, the English prince sailed home reluctantly.

He had tried to establish contact with the Mongols beyond the Euphrates, and in 1274, when he was again in England and occupied with affairs there, a Mongol embassy visited Europe and reached the papal court. A letter carried by the embassy was forwarded to Edward. It was written by the Mongol khan Abaka, from Persia, and offered alliance to the English prince, for the conquest of the Holy Land.

Edward, still cherishing hope of giving aid to Jerusalem, felt unable to leave his own kingdom. "The resolution you have taken," he wrote Abaka in response, "to relieve the Holy Land from the enemies of Christianity is most grateful to us, and we thank you. But we cannot at present send you any certain news about the time of our arrival in the Holy Land."

It is a curious turn in the tide of events—the princes of Christendom no longer in sympathy with the crusades, involved in their own quarrels and achievements at home, while a Mongol lord prepares to enter the Holy Land in the face of the Moslem power.

Baibars heard the rumble of the Mongol juggernaut from afar, and exerted himself to ward off catastrophe. He had been occupied in combing the Assassins out of their citadels

north of the Krak, and one by one he mastered the summits of the dark hills in which they had lived isolated for so long. Massiaf, the stronghold of the order—which was now becoming a domesticated people without political ambition—Kadmous and Kahf, the great cavern atop a precipice yielded to him. He swept north and brought the Armenian mountaineers to heel again. He pressed on into Asia Minor, but had to turn back to watch the Mongols in 1275.

For weeks, with his scouts quartering over the Eastern plains, and his divisions under arms in strategic points, the Panther crouched alert. He never went to his tent to sleep without fast horses waiting, ready saddled, at the entrance. He slept in his clothes, even to his spurs.

The test of strength, however, did not come in his lifetime. He did trounce a division of Mongols, 12,000 strong, and he held Armenia safe. But the Mongols, discovering that the crusaders could do nothing to support them, confined themselves to ravaging and breaking up the dominion of the Seljuks in Asia Minor.

Baibars was well content not to interfere with them. And after the loss of his fleet with which he had planned to invade Cyprus, he left the survivors of the crusaders unmolested while he withdrew to Cairo to watch the building of his new mosques and a great university. In the gateways of these new structures he placed the columns of devastated Christian churches. For once he deserted the saddle and the path of war, because he had been wounded in the last conflict with the Mongols, and from this wound he did not recover.

In his last years he saw the Sudan added to the new Egyptian empire, with the sheriffs of Mecca and Medinah. He had rebuilt Saladin's empire to its borders and beyond, by the time of his death in 1277.

He had been a fabulous and stormy figure—the nemesis of the crusades—treacherous and murderous. He had filled the slave markets of the Khan el Khalil in Cairo with Christians, and had instilled into his people the certainty that the crusaders were doomed. Probably this would have happened in any case, because the Mongol upheaval in mid-Asia had driven into the Near East hordes of the barbaric clansmen

from the steppes and the great ranges. Kharesmians, Circassians, Eastern Turks, and Tatars, they had come to stay, and they formed the bulk of the new and invincible armies. A small tribe, unnoticed as yet, had aided the broken Seljuks against the Mongol conquerors. They were the Othmans, or Ottomans, destined to gain supremacy in the plateaus of Asia Minor within a generation, and to sweep thereafter over eastern Europe. And, in time, to become lords of Constantinople.

It has been said so often—and too often—that the loss of the crusaders' kingdom was caused altogether by the weakening of the crusading spirit in Europe that it is well to reflect upon this inroad of the clansmen of mid-Asia.

Beginning after the first invasion of Genghis Khan in 1220, and ending with the growth of the three empires, the mamluk dominion in Egypt, the Mongol khanate in Persia, and the Ottoman empire in Asia Minor at the end of the Thirteenth Century, this inroad defeated all the efforts of the crusaders. Remember that the Kharesmians, out of the Caspian steppes, wrested Jerusalem away the last time—the Kharesmians and the mamluks annihilated the Christian knights and descendants of Saladin at Gaza after this loss of Jerusalem.

And the citadels of the crusaders were lost to the mamluks, who were bred out of the débris swept before the Mongols—the Hungarians, Slavs, Georgians and Tatars and Turks.

These clansmen out of mid-Asia and north of the Black Sea—fragments of people cast up by the maelstrom of the Mongol invasion—became in time devout Moslems, and they were tempered by the old Arab culture of Saladin's time.

By numbers, by their very vitality and zeal for the new faith, they overwhelmed the crusaders. St. Louis and Edward both landed at Acre with forces that might have prevailed against the Moslem armies of the early days of the crusades; but they were helpless in the face of the armies led by Baibars and the Mongol Il-khans of Persia.

The ascendancy of the Moslems in zeal, in numbers, and in military efficiency turned the scales against the crusaders in the East, who no longer had support from Europe. Christendom was not aware as yet of the change, but it was

now on the defensive. No longer could it invade the lands of Islam with any hope of success.

The only chance left the crusaders, at bay with their backs to the sea, was an alliance with the Mongols, who had gained prodigiously in culture during the last half century. The court of the Mongol Il-khan of Persia equaled that of Cairo and surpassed the papal court at Rome in its knowledge and enterprise. Painters, architects, astrologers, and historians gathered around the seat of the Mongols.

But this chance was passing beyond reach. Already the kadis and imams of Islam were assembled around the Il-khan, and the Mongol nobles were being converted to the faith of Islam. Soon, in 1305, this conversion would be complete, and the Mongol conquerors would be merged in the great melting pot of the peoples of Islam.

Baibars himself had managed to keep the remnant of the crusaders apart from the Mongols. He alone had withstood the armies of the horde and he had punished any prince who allied himself with the conquerors—Bohemund, for instance, and Edward of England, and Haython of Armenia.

While he kept the invading horde from his new empire, he so organized his state and army that it was able to endure. His successor, Kalawun, took over a strong military state.

Upon Kalawun, as the Barca had bequeathed the obligation of the Roman war to Hannibal, Baibars had imposed the duty of driving the crusaders from their last strongholds. The jihad must be fought to the end.

LVII

THE LAST STAND

STEP by step Kalawun prepared for his triumph. He even renewed truces with the crusaders while he made ready. The ambitious Charles of Sicily, who now called himself king of Jerusalem, was glad to make an alliance with the mamluk sultan, and the Genoese aided Kalawun in secret, while the Venetians held aloof from the Holy Land.

So the sultan could be certain that no relief would be sent out from Europe to the crusaders. Christendom would not interfere with his jihad. But someone else interfered.

As Hulagu had done a generation before, the Mongol Il-khan Abaka sent his army in motion toward Jerusalem, and the Christian Georgians joined the standard of the horde, while the Armenians flocked down again, and the knights rode from Marghab to swell the army of the khan. Thirty thousand Christians marched with the Mongols, down the valley of Hamah, in the autumn of 1281.

And on the wide plain by the small lake of Homs the Egyptian host gave battle to the invaders. For the first time the mamluks were face to face with the full army of the Il-khan and his allies.

No one knows exactly what followed—except that the battle was sudden and devastating, and that the mounted divisions of the Mongols and the mamluks scattered over the plain in charges that carried them leagues from the camps. The right wing of the Mongols crushed everything before it, while Kalawun with his *halka* held firm in the center.

At the end of the day, Kalawun and his guard still held the field, while the Mongol cavalry had split into two parts, groping for each other, and the Christians—the Armenians and Georgians being infantry in the main—were left stranded by themselves. A Templar who observed the battle wrote to Edward, now king of England, that the Mongols rode off on the Moslem horses, which they preferred to their own. Beyond doubt they withdrew from the field the next day, and the Armenian and Georgian division was nearly annihilated in the long retreat on foot toward the mountains in the north.

As Baibars had done, Kalawun had beaten off the Mongol attack, and in the following years he avenged himself on the knights of Marghab and Tripoli for their alliance with the invaders from the East.

With irresistible numbers he isolated and laid siege to Marghab, forcing his way up the steep mountain until he could pound with his engines at the massive black walls. For thirty-eight days the engines beat at the basalt walls, until the knights assembled in the great *salle* of their eyrie one morning, to decide between surrender and resistance until the citadel should lie in ruins and their lives be lost. From the crumbling parapet of the great tower, the sentries could look down upon the blue line of the sea, where floated the triangular sails of Moslem dhows, and over white chalk hills where tiny caravans moved through the dust. Marghab was cut off, without hope of aid, and that morning the master of the Hospitalers surrendered the castle, while more than one man brushed the tears from his eyes.

The mamluks, entering the gate tower, looked about them and cried that the angels of Allah must have fought for them and bestowed upon them such a citadel.

Four years later Tripoli fell to their attack, and with the

death of Bohemund VII, the line of the Norman princes of Antioch ceased, after a reign of close to two hundred years.

Except for the small seaports, only Acre remained. Kalawun had ordered the timbers cut for the siege engines, and the sledges of rocks started on the road down from the hills toward this city of the Christians, when he fell ill. Already his armed host had marched forth, and the desert folk were riding up from the plain—the White Slaves of the River rode stirrup to stirrup under the black banners, when the sultan's litter was laid on the ground and he died.

But he gave command that he should not be placed in his tomb until the unbelievers had been driven from Acre. The kadis said he had been a martyr, in the war for the faith, and his son, El Malik el Khalil, took the reins of command, ordering the march resumed.

As they crossed the Gaza sands, the desert folk came in to the host, and the mullahs watching from Hebron could see the glow of the fires. By day the dust of their marching overspread the plain like a veil, when the dervishes ran beside the chargers, and the Arab women sang their exultation in the spoil to be taken. They sang as they marched, and the camel trains coming down from the hills cried a greeting to them.

For this was the day appointed, the day for the casting-out of the unbelievers, and the final reckoning, wherein the faithful would taste of martyrdom or of honor and riches.

So the readers chanted to them, while the camels snarled by the thorn bush, and the chargers stamped restlessly in the lines beyond the fires.

"Lo! The day of Severance is fixed: the day when there shall be a blast on the trumpet, and ye shall come in crowds . . . when heaven shall open its portals . . . for the faithful, a blissful abode—gardens and vineyards . . . and damsels with swelling breasts, and a full cup!

"On this day the Spirit and the Angels shall range themselves in order, speaking no word.

"The sure day! The day on which a man shall see the deeds

which his hands have sent before him, and the unbelievers shall say,

"'O—would that I were dust!'"

As the débris of a storm, washed down from the hills, gathers in a pile on the plain, the remnants of the crusaders filled the walls of Acre, and thronged the gardens of the suburbs, in that month of March, 1291.

Most of them had journeyed thither from the hill castles, bringing what goods they could carry with them; the richest of them owned palaces in the suburbs, surrounded by iron grille work and ornamented with windows of colored glass. Here dwelt the members of the great family of the Ibelin, and the Lusignans, *émigrés* from Palestine, with the prince of Galilee, and the lords of Outremer.

In the streets of Acre, between the massive walls of the buildings, all of one height and of the same yellowish stone, rode the Templars and Hospitalers who had been driven from their castles. Under silk awnings Syrian merchants had their stalls, driving a brisk trade in fine carpets and precious stones. For the *émigrés* had brought wealth with them, and the Genoese and Venetian merchants, guarded by their men-at-arms, haggled over bargains avidly. Galleons crowded the port, coming and going from Cyprus.

Some of the barons were sending their families out to Cyprus, but most of them kept to their houses in Acre, unwilling to believe that the city was in danger. Curiously, the streets were gay, the taverns thronged. Feasting kept up far into the night. Gorgeous prostitutes were seen entering the portals of the palaces, attended by black slaves. Syrian and Greek girls filled the upper rooms of the wine shops, and laughed from the windows at the brown-habited monks.

Acre was wakeful, alive with a feverish excitement bred of uncertainty. Pavilions stood under the poplar trees of the square between the cathedral and the Hospital. Here could be seen the coat-of-arms of a constable of France, there the shield of Otto of Granson, who had just arrived from Europe. Rumors could be heard in every corner and courtyard, and

the galleys coming in from the home ports brought new tidings.

Men said that the pope, Nicholas, had sent out a fleet, while others insisted that no more than a handful of Italian soldiery had been sent, who had already become breeders of trouble. . . . The good friar Ricoldo of Monte Croce had gone out among the Moslems, and perhaps—since he was a holy man—by his aid a miracle might be wrought. . . . It was true that the sultan Kalawun had died, and this might be the miracle. . . . There were not ships enough to transport a quarter of all these people to Cyprus, if the Moslem host appeared and laid siege to the city.

In the *salle* of the Hospital, under the carved stone arches, the commanders of the city discussed other tidings. The patriarch, the masters of the orders were in charge while they awaited the coming of Henry, king of Cyprus, with his small following of ships. They knew the peril in which they stood, and saw only one chance of succor.

A certain Genoese, Buscarel by name, had brought letters from the Mongol Il-khan, Arghun, to the pope. The Il-khan said that he was about to invade the Holy Land, and that one of his sons was a Christian. But he demanded an army from Europe to coöperate with him—and no such army was preparing. A converted Mongol, Chagan, had brought a second missive, still more pressing, from the Il-khan. The only response Nicholas had made was to urge Arghun to be baptized. Meanwhile, no one knew what the Mongols were doing.[1] And the Moslem host was on the march.

King Henry arrived from Cyprus, and the muster roll of the crusader families was complete. For these few days they were united, in all the splendor of their small courts, in all the careless indolence that had fastened upon them, generation by generation.

With their wives and courtesans they gambled and feasted —anything to drown suspense and gnawing fear—in the moon-lit roof terraces where the breath of the sea tempered the lifeless air. The whine of fiddles, the cries of jesters, the

[1]After waiting two years, Arghun began his preparations for the move against Egypt, but he died in March, 1291, at the same time Acre was besieged.

modulated voices of minstrels kept them from thinking of the future. They fingered the dice cup and the wine goblet, and let the hours pass uncounted.

Restless and quarrelsome they were—degenerate, if you will—yet they kept to their trysting place. Lords and knights, fair ladies and somber monks, mild nuns and insolent courtesans, bearded patriarchs and heedless minstrels, they gathered for the last time in feverish gayety, to await death.

And it came.

It came in mid-May, after weeks of siege, with the thudding of fourscore engines, the cracking of bowlders against crumbling walls, the flash and roar of exploding naphtha, and the ceaseless summons of the drums. The drums on camel back, scores of them, that dinned and thundered through the hours.

Through the gardens of the suburbs, over the smoking ruins of the outlying palaces, surged the host of Islam. Marabout and *hadji*, mamluk and negro roared in exultation. The pavilions stretched to the hills. Oil, poured in the blackened ground and fired by eager hands, sent a smoke screen rolling toward the broken battlements, where the moat had been filled in by columns of beasts of burden, driven forward laden with faggots and slaughtered at the ditch. Beyond the ruined moat a breach of sixty yards opened in the wall, and weary swordsmen, blinded by the smoke, waited for the assault to come, while flights of arrows swept over them.

The Templars who stood there had regained the breach after one onset, but there was no one to relieve them, and they waited, listening to the diapason of the drums and the songs of the dervishes behind the smoke.

Through the night the men of Islam made ready, mustering in four waves, the first carrying heavy wooden shields, the second caldrons of oil and torches, the third bows, the fourth short, curved swords. And behind them, the regiments of horsemen. Among them, in the half light before dawn, passed the white-robed dervishes carrying long knives, who would lead the way. Verily, sang the dervishes, Allah had paved the way and had shrouded them with a mantle—

for a heavy mist lay along the shore and upon the line of the wall, and the very sea had risen against the unbelievers, so that it barred the unbelievers from flight, tossing their ships in its grip, and delivered them to the swords of the faithful.

The drums pounded their summons, and the cymbals clanged—the dervishes began to scream and run through the mist. After them advanced the first wave of the attack.

A roar of triumph sounded from the wall, and the oil flared up through the mist, showing the leaping figures of men, and the dark masses that surged toward the flames. The clatter of steel sounded faint against the monotone of the drums—and fainter still as the swordsmen were driven from the breach.

When the sun broke through the mist, the Moslems were within the breach. And then the tumult, that had died down, sprang up anew. The master of the Hospitalers with his knights had charged the Moslem waves and thrown back the attack.

Then, with a measured tread, the armored regiments of mamluks advanced, over the ruined moat, over the piles of bodies and the broken engines, pressing back the wounded knights, forcing their way into the streets, surging around the bands of Christians who tried to beat them off. And behind the mamluks, the sultan's cavalry rode into Acre.

The drums ceased.

Acre had fallen, but for hours and days the crusaders fought. . . . The master of the Hospital, begging his men to set him down as he was carried off, wounded . . . The patriarch, led on board one of the galleys that soon filled with fugitives, until the heavy swell swamped the over-weighted boat, and all within it went down . . . The Dominicans gathered together, singing *Salve Regina* as they were cut down . . . The Templars, holding out in their house upon the sea, until the last boats had got to sea or had been captured, and then surrendering . . . The knights, disarmed, staring at the exultant mamluks and negroes who swarmed into the great fortress, tearing the garments from young girls and laughing as they befouled the altars—until the knights, with their bare hands, turned on the despoilers and slew them, throwing

their bodies out of the embrasures, and closing the doors against the Moslems without. And with their hands they defended their house, until fire and steel overcame them, and the last man ceased to breathe. . . .

It was the end.

By courier and pigeon post the tidings spread through the land of Islam. Thirty thousand infidels had fallen to the sword in a single day at Acre. The bodies of the Templars had burned in the black towers. Elsewhere, in the little seaports, the unbelievers were fleeing—the mighty Acre had fallen, and they were helpless and afraid.

Deserted were the halls of Château Pèlerin—the swordsmen of Islam walked unhindered through its gates. The last ships were leaving Tortosa where the cathedral stood empty as a house that has lost its master, and the hymns of the Nazarenes were heard no more.

The last ships had gone out to sea, and their sails had vanished under the sky. So said the messengers of Islam, and the camelmen upon the Baghdad road. And the kadis cried to the multitudes that the jihad had triumphed.

Along the coast of the Holy Land, the bodies of the crusaders lay drying in the sun-heated ditches, or in heaps of charred bones. The only living crusaders were the captives, sitting in rags on the rowing benches of the galleys, or limping under burdens in the alleys of Cairo. Down in the lifeless air of the Dead Sea, their bare feet stumble over the stones and burning sand. If they raised their eyes, they beheld far above them, remote under the blazing sky, the ramparts of Jerusalem where once they had ruled as lords.

AFTERWORD

AFTERWORD

It was the end of the crusades. The refugees gathered in Cyprus were too weak to think of approaching the coast again, and no further crusade came out of Europe to seek Jerusalem.

Ironically, it was then that the Mongol host rode to the Holy Land for the third time, under the Il-khan Ghazan. An army of ninety thousand crossed the Euphrates in 1299, and this time it was victorious.

Ghazan drove the mamluks in flight to the south, and was in Damascus in the first days of the year 1300. The Mongols waited out the winter in their camps from Gaza to Aleppo, but saw no sign of the Christian knights. Aware of their approach, the king of Cyprus raided the Egyptian coast with his fleet, and a few ships of the Templars tried to make a landing near Tortosa, without success.

Weary at last of holding his ground with heavy losses against the warlike Moslems, and without aid from the Christians, Ghazan—who had received no response to his letters addressed to the pope—withdrew from Syria in February, 1301, and with him vanished the last hope of the crusaders.

Ghazan died in 1304. He had been the ablest, if not the

most enlightened, prince of his generation, and, while he inclined to the faith of Islam, he had followed the old Mongol policy of religious tolerance in all his lands. He had sought to establish the crusaders again in the Holy Land as a barrier against the mamluks.

His successor became a true Moslem, and, curiously, with this conversion the great power of the Mongol empire in Persia began to decline, as the dominion of the mighty Kubilai tended to break up after the latter's conversion to Buddhism in the Far East.

Before then, Marco Polo had wandered back from Cathay and found no one to believe his tale of the court of the great khan. He was taken captive in a sea battle between the Venetians and Genoese, and had to content himself with dictating the book of his travels to a scribe to while away the hours in his prison.

With the breakdown of the vast machinery of the Mongol empire, and the conversion to Islam of the Western Mongols and Tatars, while the mamluk empire in Egypt grew in power, the gateways of the East were closed to Europeans, as they had been before the crusades. Only the neutral Venetian and Genoese merchants and isolated missionaries could penetrate beyond Constantinople and Cyprus.

Meanwhile, in Europe itself, a very fever of activity began —with the pen instead of the sword. Geographers pieced out the world that lay to the east, while schools were formed to teach the oriental languages. Historians gathered together all the chronicles of the crusades, and waged heated discussions as to why the great enterprise had failed.

Some of them—at the courts of the kings—blamed the Church of Rome for its exploitation of the crusades, and accused it of keeping in its treasure chests the wealth that had been poured into its alms boxes during the last century.

Others—historians of the Church—blamed the ambitions and rivalries of the European princes.

Most of them shook their heads over the avarice and treachery of the Italian maritime republics, and added that the quarrels of the crusaders themselves had resulted in the loss of the Christian colonies.

LETTER OF GHAZAN KHAN

Conclusion of the Il-khan's letter in Mongolian—the Uighur script—to the court of Rome in 1302. The last known communication from the Mongols, seeking alliance with Europe, before their conversion to Islam. Such an alliance would have restored Outremer to the crusaders. But no heed was paid by the papal court or monarchs of Europe to the Mongols' advances. The original was identified recently by Monsignor Tisserant among the Oriental manuscripts of the Vatican.

COURTESY OF THE APOSTOLIC LIBRARY, VATICAN CITY

Much was written and little done in this generation between the loss of Acre in 1291 and the affair of the Templars in 1310. Both Edward II of England and Philip the Fair of France took the pledge of the crusade, and raised money for a new enterprise; but they found more pressing matters at home to be paid for with the money.

And the theoreticians and amateur strategists poured out plans for redeeming the great defeat. The old project of Constantinople was revived—in print. A landing on the African coast and a march to Cairo was urged, again. Above all, a complete reorganization of the leadership at home was advocated—control of the preparations to be taken out of the hands of the prelates of the Church, and given to a kind of league that would be above tampering with. The Temple and the Hospital should be united in one order, and rivalry between them eliminated. A fleet should be built to serve the crusade, and the coasts of Islam blockaded.

So said the theoreticians, who did not know that the spirit of the crusade had passed from the men at home. In this new age of realism and commercial beginnings, the crusader had no place.

Nor could any crusade now win Jerusalem from the rising powers of Islam.

From the Golden Horde on the Volga, down through the Ottomans in Asia Minor, through the Il-khans on the Euphrates, and the mamluks in Cairo, a ring of weapons had been drawn about the Holy Land. And Europe's task thenceforth would be to defend itself, and to fight for its very life against the throngs of Islam.[1] Some of its expeditions would be

[1]In the next two centuries we find the crusades changed in aspect. Adventurous soldiers like Peter of Cyprus and Boucicaut lead forays against the oncoming Moslems. The "crusades" of Nicopolis and of Varna were attempts to turn back the Moslem tide led by the Ottomans, who captured Constantinople in 1453. The Europeans, placed on the defensive, are locked in the long conflict by land and sea with the Turks, allied to the Tatars, Mamluks, and Corsairs—the conflict that only ends at the gates of Vienne, and the Gulf of Lepanto.

The expeditions of this great war are still termed crusades at times, but they are actually purely military movements, to gain possession of seaports, fortresses, and territory in Europe. The Hospitalers still serve in them, but only as the political organization of the Knights of Malta.

called crusades, but they would be only military movement against the new forces of Islam.

The true crusades ended at Acre in 1291, when Jerusalem was lost beyond doubt. Perhaps foreknowledge of this inspired the doctrinaires in their plaint that something should be done to redeem the disaster.

In this time of wordy argument and useless conjecture, men turned their attention to the twin surviving units of the crusades—the Temple and the Hospital.

Both had been driven out of the Holy Land, and had lost their strongholds beyond Cyprus. The Hospital—the Red Cross of the crusades—kept on caring for the sick and aiding travelers, while it prepared a new frontier post in the Island of Rhodes. (Thereafter, its knights were known as the Knights of Rhodes, until they retreated to Malta, when they became the well-known Knights of Malta.)

Not so did the Templars. They had been the Transport Corps of the crusades, with the duty of caring for pilgrims, forwarding military units, arranging financing and shipping. They had acted as guides, liaison officers, and shock troops—their banner *Beauséant* had always had its place in the van of the Christian armies. They had gone into action knowing that they could not retreat and that if they were taken captive the Moslems would show them no mercy. More than twenty thousand knights of the order had been killed in action.

Now the Holy Land, their *raison d'être*, was lost. The great organization was thrown back into Europe. It had its frontier post in Cyprus, of course, and in Spain its commanderies found occupation against the Moors. And it kept its fleet in readiness.

Meanwhile it had grown vast indeed. European nobles, often with sons in its ranks, had made a practice of willing their property to the Temple. Matthew of Paris says that it now held nine thousand houses in Christendom. Having served not only as landowners but as bankers for the later crusades, the Templars now administered huge amounts of

money, in trust. In Paris, they housed the royal treasury of France, and kept its accounts. They guarded the treasury of the harassed papal court, now in exile in Avignon.

Because the Temple owed allegiance to no lord, and because its members were pledged to take no profit for themselves, the order was entrusted with such treasures. Its fortified commanderies, guarded by the soldier-monks, were proof against thieves or robber barons. Even the pope could no longer influence its councils. In France it had a veritable chain of strongholds, with lands and mortgages upon lands uncounted. It was a state within a state. And once the king, Philip the Fair, had run from an unruly mob in Paris to sanctuary within its doors.

Good people shook their heads at sight of this growing wealth, especially in hard times when the burly soldiers of the Temple went about well fed and clad in linens and furs. As defenders of the Holy Land, the Templars had been brave and notable figures, but they were not favorites now, when they rode afield to gather interest from a mortgaged hamlet, or to claim farms bequeathed to them.

"They devoted their efforts," said Matthew of Paris, "instead of aiding the Sepulcher, to administering their properties—and even ruled whole districts, like kings."

Others blamed the Templars for the defeats in the East, and whispered that they had been in league with the Saracens. Because the Templars held their meetings secretly in the hours before dawn, men said idly that they must have something to conceal—no doubt some evil and unholy ritual. But no one was prepared for what came to pass.

Europe crucified the Templars. Or rather, it made them the scapegoats of the crusades, and burned alive the best of them.

THE TRIAL OF THE TEMPLARS

On the thirteenth of October, 1307, the royal officers in the governments of France opened sealed orders from the hand of the king, Philip the Fair, and found that they were to ar-

rest all Templars wherever found, and hold them to be questioned. In the Paris house was seized Jacques de Molay, grand master of the order, who had come up from Cyprus at the bidding of the pope the year before.

Philip and his advisers had prepared this step with some care. The wealth of the Temple, the *imperium in imperio* it enjoyed within his own kingdom of France, and its growing political influence placed a rein upon his ambition. As to Philip, men said that he had the face of an angel, the eyes of a falcon, the body of a giant, and the heart of a devil. Add that he had the agile brain of a scholar, well versed in the law of his day, and you have a man who is to be dreaded.

He had talked it over with the pope, Clement V, a weak soul, an invalid, and now a refugee from Rome, at Avignon. The Temple had outgrown its bounds—it must be brought to hand, separated from its possessions, placed under authority. Had not its master, De Molay, refused to join the order to the Hospital, and accept as its new master a son of the king of France? Indeed, De Molay had refused. Clement, meditating upon the great possessions of the Temple, agreed to an investigation of the order. The king suggested that it would be better if he should make the first move, and the pope agreed.

Philip, working with Nogaret, the royal chancellor, and with William of Paris, the inquisitor of France, had planned more than he chose to confide to Clement. The royal officers had brought to him informers—members of the order who had been punished and cast out for various offenses. From them, the king had gleaned the testimony he needed. He would charge the order with the sin of heresy.

Clement, who was making his own plans, did not know of the sealed orders that required the royal officers to interrogate the Templars immediately after their arrest—at need, under torture. And Philip's instructions to his officers contained a full statement of the crimes with which the Templars were to be charged:

". . . For long, upon the statement of persons worthy of trust, made to us, it has been revealed that the brothers of the order of the soldiers of the Temple, hiding the wolf under

the semblance of a lamb, and casting despite upon the religion of our faith, are crucifying anew in these days our Lord, Jesus-Christ, and are heaping upon Him injuries worse than those He endured upon the cross. When, at their initiation into the order, they are presented with His image—what must I say? They deny Him, thrice, and thrice spit upon His face. Following this, stripped of their garments, and bare, they are kissed by him who initiates them, first in the back below the spine, then upon the navel, then upon the lips—to the shame of human dignity. . . . And afterwards they are obliged by the vow they have taken and without dread of offending human law, to yield themselves, one to the other whenever required, in frightful lust. . . .

"These are, with other things, the deeds of that false fellowship—a brotherhood that is mad and given to idol worship . . ."

The arrest of all the Templars in France upon the same day caused a clamor of amazement. The tidings traveled by horseback from village to village, but before public opinion could take definite shape, the royal officers were putting the captives to the question—even before the officers of the inquisition appeared upon the scene. And the questions were those indicated by the king's instructions.

"Did you, at your initiation, deny Christ? Have you knowledge that others did so? All of them? Or the greater part? Or a few? . . . Did you spit upon the cross? Did you see others do so? All of them? Or the greater part? Or a few. . .?"

Monotonously, the long list of questions was read over to each prisoner, separated from his companions. And then again, when the prisoner was bound upon a wooden frame, with ropes stretching, a little at a time, his wrists and ankles away from his limbs. When the bones were pulled slowly from their sockets, the questions were read again—and again.

Or perhaps the man under question was seated in a chair, bound fast to the back and arms, while an iron circlet was drawn tight upon his temples and twisted into the skin, against the bone, and the questions were read to him again. Thirty-six Templars died under this torture.

If a man confessed to the charges, he was not put to the

torture. Some, who had listened to the screams from the torture chamber, swore to the full confession without further prompting. It was not necessary to take every man in hand, because the confessions already sworn to before the examiners involved all the commanderies in France. Three unnamed Templars denied all the charges, and continued to deny them under torture. Faced with the alternative of torture, few were able to go through the ordeal without swearing that part if not all the charges were true.

So, by the swift action of the royal examiners, the king was supplied with the blackest testimony against the order, by the Templars themselves. De Molay's confession was damaging, and it was said that he wrote to the other officers of the order, advising them to swear to the charges.

Public opinion, at first astounded, and then curious, now had the darkest scandal of Christendom to dwell upon. The soldier-monks had indeed practised evil rites in their secret meetings—the very guardians of the Sepulcher were servants of Mahound! Little wonder that they had waxed rich and proud when the arts of the Evil One had aided them!

Still, opinion in general could not make certain of the matter. The Templars had many friends, who were angered as well as dismayed. And the Templars in other countries denied the charges to a man. Could it be that these black rites had been confined to France?

Philip wrote to the sovereigns of neighboring countries, demanding that they arrest and question the Templars. Clement, at first, had protested—now he issued, in November, a bull ordering other princes to arrest the Templars and hold their goods in his name. He sent his cardinals to Paris, to oppose the seizure of the property of the Templars in France by the king. De Molay and Hugh of Pairaud, visitor of the order, revoked their confessions. Informed of this, the pope exerted his authority for the first time. It was more than time, because the French king was swiftly overturning one of the very foundation stones of papal authority.

The Temple was a religious order, and the king's officers had exceeded their authority in putting its members to the question. Philip, meanwhile, had appealed to the University

of Paris on this point, and the masters of theology ruled against him. No secular authority had power to try the Templars, a religious order, on a charge of heresy. Only the pope had authority to judge the affair.

Reluctantly, the king and his advisers had to admit the papal representatives to the accounting of the property of the Templars. For a few months the whole thing hung in the balance. In that time the persecutors of the Templars showed their ingenuity.

A campaign of propaganda was begun, cleverly enough. The text of the confessions somehow came to be circulated among nobles and common people. "Disinterested" publicists appeared at the papal court, to speak indignantly against the order. And it was whispered among the people that if the Templars were found to be heretics, no one in their debt need repay any money owed them. The Dominicans, leaders of the inquisition, had long been jealous of the soldier-monks, and now used their influence against the captives. Men remembered that they had heard others say that drunkards "drank like Templars." And the houses of prostitutes in Germany—were they not called "Temple-houses"?

Details of the inventories of property found in the commanderies were given out to the curious public—so many silver candlesticks and an amber casket found in the chamber of such an officer—a saddle ornamented with silver—so many loads of grain owing to the chapel at Sainte Michele, and not yet paid. . . .

One William of Plaisians, the mouthpiece of Nogaret, addressed a series of arguments to the papal court, claiming that the case against the order was already clear, and that it was the duty of the papal consistory to punish the guilty members. Plaisians' arguments found their way into the hands of the public. It is interesting to look at portions of his summing-up.

"This victory is clearly established and indubitable:

"Because they have avowed in so many confessions the notorious truth—

"Because of the public outcry they have raised against themselves—

"And the incontestable testimony of a great and catholic prince[1]—

"And the verdict of so many catholic pontiffs—

"And the outcry of so many barons, and common people.

"Because, since time immemorial, people have reported that in their secret initiation they were guilty of hidden evil, and for that reason they were, truthfully, suspected by all—openly and notoriously.

"Because they have always held their chapters and meetings at night, which is the custom of heretics—since those who do evil hate the light.

"Because—by the fruit of their deeds we can know them—it is said that the Holy Land was lost by their lapse.

"Because in many parts of the world they have fortified their castles against the Church.

"From all this we must of necessity conclude that the aforesaid deeds are notorious, clear and indubitable. . . . And so the cause of our faith ought to be safeguarded by the pontiff of Rome, who safeguards all laws, and is himself not bound by any bond."

To bring pressure upon the pope, the persecutors of the order held what might be called a public demonstration against the Templars at Tours. Philip sent to the pope seventy-two of the most damaging confessions. In these years of 1308–1309, the confessions had been secured, but the Templars had not been tried because the king and his advisers—unable to try the case themselves—had so frightened the papal council—which should have tried the Tem-

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[1]Philip the Fair. Plaisians to the contrary, there was no general public feeling against the Templars before Philip's action in arresting them. Plaisians' argument is that their confessions bear out the previous suspicion of the order, and that these confessions render it obligatory for the pope to condemn them.

Yet his *discours* reveals that the confessions were gleaned by torture: ". . . After the general and *uniform* confessions of *all*, others have *spontaneously* confessed to enormities."

And again: ". . . It is not needful to disquiet oneself to know how, or before whom, the truth was discovered, provided it be discovered, and less than any other should the pontiff of Rome disquiet himself—he who is bound by no bond."

The situation becomes clear enough when Plaisians, to force the pope to further action, hints that otherwise the sins of the papal court at Avignon might be made public, in the same manner as the crimes of the order of the Temple.

plars on the charge of heresy—that the pope shrank from taking the responsibility on himself.

Philip meanwhile carried on secret negotiations with Avignon, and hit upon a compromise. Clement was to name ecclesiastical commissions to hold inquests upon the testimony. The findings of the commissions were to be presented to a papal council, to be held in Vienne, and at this council the fate of the Templars would be decided. In the interval the property of the order would be administered by royal and papal officers, equally. And the Templars were kept in their cells. Only a dozen members of the order had managed to escape arrest.

So, the captives saw a ray of hope. At last they were to have a public hearing! Nine members of the order drew up a defense, which was read before a commission:

"In your presence, reverend Fathers, and commissioners appointed by the sovereign lord pontiff, the undersigned brothers of the order say in response . . .

"They protest that whatever the brothers of the Temple have said to the discredit of the order while they were in prison, constrained by requests and fear, is not to the prejudice of the order—and this they will prove when they are at liberty. . . .

"Under terror and fear, lies will be uttered and the truth withheld. The greater part of the brethren are so afflicted by terror, that it should not astonish you that they lie, but rather it should amaze you that any are found to uphold the truth, when one knows the sufferings and the agonies that they endure, and the menaces they undergo daily—while the liars enjoy comfort and liberty, and great promises are made to them daily. It is amazing that more belief is given to the liars who give testimony in the interest of their own bodies than to those who have died under torture to uphold the truth, and to the great majority who undergo the daily ordeals in prison to uphold the truth. . . .

"They say that no one has found any brother of the Temple outside of France who assents to these calumnies. That is because only in France have the calumnies been rewarded. . . .

"Whoever enters into the order pledges four things—to

obey, to remain chaste, to remain poor, and to devote all his force to the conquest of the Holy Land of Jerusalem. He is given the honest kiss of peace, and stripped of his old garments and clad in the habit and given the cross which he carries hanging on his breast thereafter . . . And whoever says otherwise, lies.

"That is why the detractors and corrupters . . . have sought out apostates or brothers driven out of the order as sick beasts are driven out of the herd, to concert with them these calumnies and lies which are now falsely fastened upon the brothers and the order.

"The brothers were forced to confess to these crimes because the lord king, deceived by these detractors, informed the lord pope of all that had passed, and thus the lord king and the lord pope were tricked by false advice. . . .

"The brothers who have confessed such things would willingly revoke their confessions if they dared. So they beg that they be given a hearing, and enough security to permit them to speak the truth without fear."

The response to such defenses of the order was definite and unmistakable. In the province of Sens, the archbishop Philip of Marigny, a man attached to the royal interests, condemned fifty-four Templars who had revoked their confessions as relapsed heretics. They were carted out at once and burned alive.

With the pope subservient to them, the royal persecutors had only one obstacle to face before the decision at Vienne—and that was the results of the arrest of the Templars elsewhere than in France. These results had not been to their liking.

In Italy the affair had gone well enough. Under instructions from the papal court, the mass of lay brothers had been put to the question and adjudged guilty. Many had been burned, and all property confiscated.

In England at first little attention had been paid to the requests of Philip and Clement for a trial of the order. Then a papal bull—*Pastoralis Solis*—obliged Edward to arrest the members of the order, and later Clement advised that their testimony be taken under torture. A case was made out

against them, and their castles seized in part, but there was no general condemnation.

In Spain, the princes were friendly to the order, and saw no advantage in allowing its property to be yielded up to the papal officers beyond their borders. Besides, the Templars there had taken up arms and made ready to defend their castles rather than undergo trial. The Spanish princes declared the Templars innocent.

Portugal was hostile to the persecutors of the Templars. After interrogation without torture, the order was found guiltless.

In Cyprus a curious thing happened. The Templars were tried twice. The first time, under the king Amalric of Tyre, their friend, they were found guiltless. Then Amalric died, and was succeeded by Henry of Lusignan, an enemy of the order. Henry was instigated by the pope to try the Templars again, and this time they were convicted of heresy and treason—their property forfeited and many of them burned.

In Germany, no trial was held. The lay princes rallied to the support of the Templars, forcing the papal legates to withdraw and freeing the captives. When a council assembled to judge them, armed Templars forced their way into the council hall bearing an indignant statement of their innocence. Thereupon the council rendered them public homage.

All this proved to be awkward for the papal *Curia*. The order, held to be guilty in France, and found guilty in Italy, and censorable in England, was at the same time innocent in Spain, and blameless in Portugal, not guilty and then guilty in Cyprus, and publicly praised in Germany.

Even to the agile minds of the papal jurisconsults, the trial of the Templars was becoming a complex problem. By now the pope, under pressure from Philip, had shown himself urgent for the condemnation of the Temple. And this circumstance might prove awkward in the extreme, since the pope was the only individual in all Christendom entitled to judge the order. So it became needful, in the interest of the papacy itself, to condemn the order at the approaching Council of Vienne. Better for Clement if he had never called the Council of Vienne.

But there was another side to the problem: both the pope and the king had laid their hands on the immense properties of the Temple, wherever possible. And the main object in the thoughts of the *Curia* and the royal court was the possession of the wealth of the Temple. They would not relinquish *that.*

Such was the situation, when in the autumn of 1311 everybody took the road to Vienne.

Clement traveled thither, with the papal counselors. Philip moved up to Lyons, and sent to the scene his group of emissaries, among them Nogaret, Marigny, Plaisians. These agents held daily conferences with the popes and the cardinals at Vienne. And, in spite of the burnings, some two thousand Templars appeared to defend the order.

Public opinion divided into two camps—one party urging the condemnation of the Templars and the cancellation of all debts owing to the order—the other championing the order and demanding a hearing before the pope himself. This was refused. Clement would not hear representatives of the Temple. Seven of them, who persisted in seeking a hearing, were imprisoned.

But the party friendly to the Templars now held the ascendancy in numbers, and demanded whether the prisoners were to be granted defenders in their hearing before the council. Clement referred this important question to the council for decision. And the answer was that the order must be granted advocates in its trial.

This decision made matters worse for the persecutors. If defenders appeared in public with the privilege of offering evidence in favor of the prisoners, the prosecution would be deprived of its one prop—the confessions.

For weeks the king's agents traveled back and forth between Philip at Lyons and Clement at Vienne. Nothing but the suppression of the order and the confiscation of its goods would satisfy Philip. If Clement refused, Philip threatened to charge the papacy with heresy. A solution must be found by the papacy, and a solution was found.

Philip went himself to Vienne and talked with the pope.

Two days later Clement announced his decision before the grand commission of the council and the cardinals. He declared that the order of the Temple was suppressed. It was abolished, Clement announced, "not by a definite sentence, since it cannot be condemned under the law, but by means of an apostolic act."

So the trial of the Temple was never held. The pope dissolved it by his own act.

The reasons for this act, given out to the public, were: that the order had been criticized, that it had become impotent to aid the Holy Land, and that there was urgent need of a decision in the case so that the property of the Temple might not suffer more by neglect.

This property itself was awarded—after payment of expenses to the king of France and to others—to the Hospital. But after twenty years of litigation and fighting the Hospitalers managed to possess themselves of only a portion of this great bequest. Most of it remained in the hands of those who had seized it in the first place.

Public opinion showed itself hostile to the pope's act, and Clement tried to justify himself in the bull *Vox in Excelsis* of the following spring. By this bull he returned the individual Templars to the jurisdiction of their local tribunals.

By so doing Clement, after refusing the Templars trial before his council, handed them back to the mercy of the judges who had first extorted confessions from them. They were punished in different ways, and so the impression left upon the world at large was that the Templars, at least in France, had been guilty as charged, and this impression endured until modern times. Only the high officers of the order imprisoned at Paris, Clement reserved for sentence by three cardinals. The cardinals sentenced them to lifelong imprisonment.

On the parvis of Notre Dame, before an assembled multitude, the sentence was read to the four officers. Two of them heard it in silence, but Charnay and De Molay stepped forward and protested, retracting their confessions in full, and saying that they knew their only guilt had been in helping thus to injure an order that had been blameless.

The twain were taken under guard and hustled off to the provost of Paris. Before anyone could intervene, Philip sent an order to the provost. De Molay and Charnay were led out at night to the island of the river. There, between the garden of the king and the monastery of the Augustinians, they were burned alive at the stake.

The Templars as an order had been innocent of the charges made against them.[1] They had been disgraced, beggared, and imprisoned by unmistakable conspiracy. Hundreds of them had been tortured and scores of them burned to death to satisfy the avarice of a prince of Christendom and the policy of a Father of the Church and the jealousy of the priests and the greed of the people at large. Unheeded at the time, a wanderer upon the highroads, an exile from the city of Florence, heard of their trial and wrote down a few lines in a curious kind of book that placed the great figures of history in an inferno, or a purgatory, or a paradise at the author's whim:

I saw the new Pilate, so cruel,
That, unsatiated, and unrighteous,
He carries into the Temple his miser's bags . . .

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[1]For centuries the question of the guilt or innocence of the Templars has been debated bitterly in Europe. Great interests hinged upon the question, which touched the doctrine of papal infallibility, of the royal rights, of transmontanism, of the Inquisition. Until modern times defenders of the order have had to tread gingerly. For long the general opinion was that the order was guilty—even in Scott's *Ivanhoe* this belief is reflected. Now the consensus of opinion among scholars is that the Templars were made the scapegoats of others' sins, and were punished far beyond their deserts.

The present writer, who held no brief for or against the order when he first studied the evidence in the trial, believes without equivocation that the order of the Temple was innocent, and its persecutors guilty. He was led to this belief by such circumstances as the following:

1. The only evidence offered against the order was given by informers expelled from the order for misconduct. 2. These informers did not volunteer their evidence, but were sought out by the king and the prosecutors as early as 1305. 3. The worst batch of confessions in France are so similar that they must have been prepared in advance—apparently copied from the king's orders of arrest—for the men under torture to swear to. 4. No secret and blasphemous Rule of the Temple has been unearthed, although interested scholars have searched for it diligently. 5. In the documents of the prosecution there is internal evidence of a case made out in advance, of haste, of pressure against the pope, and of downright conspiracy at every step.

So Dante, who was, in his way, a judge of character, summarized the action of the French king and the whole proceeding against the Templars.

And it bore fruit, this trial of the order. With the passing of the Templars, the ideal of the soldier-crusader vanished, and the eastern frontier was left open to the Turks. While at home the trial bestowed new power upon the inquisition and sanctioned the wringing of evidence from men by torture. While it left the common people seeking in all corners for traces of witchcraft and dealings with Satan—a search that continued, horribly, for centuries.

It is curious that Europe should have burned at the stake the last commanders of the crusaders.

THE RESULTS OF THE CRUSADES

So VAST was the crusading movement and so long did it endure, that no man to-day may enumerate with certainty its effects. We have no scales in which to weigh the gain or loss of it. Nor have we words to describe the effect upon civilization, when whole peoples were torn loose from their isolation and set in motion, to behold new lands, to hear strange languages, and to return with new ideas.

But we do know some of the results. For one thing, the crusades brought back certain *gleanings* out of Asia; and they caused certain *changes* in society in Europe, and in the end they resulted in certain *contributions* to that society.

What the Crusades Brought Back

There were other points of contact between Europe and Asia than the conquests of the cross-bearers. Spain, chiefly, and Sicily and Byzantium. So many of the gleanings from the East entered through other channels; but during the two centuries from 1095 to 1291 the crusades established the great boulevard of communication between East and West. In that time the years of conflict were few, the years of truce

many, and trade and intercourse practically never ceased.

During the crusades Europeans became familiar with the finer cloths of the East—cotton and muslin as well as damask. They began to use cotton paper, and a few rare porcelains from China. They learned something of the manufacture of colored glass and mirrors.

Rhubarb and spices, rice, sugar, artichokes, and lemons came out of the East, during the crusades, with other fruits and foods.

Arabic words still surviving in our language give proof of the new objects and ideas brought out of Asia. These words meet us everywhere—from admiral, alcohol, alfalfa, alkali, algebra, and azimuth, through the alphabet to tariff and zenith.

The first crusaders brought back the windmill with them, and later they adopted much of oriental heraldry.

Christian scholars in Spain and Sicily as well as in the colonies of the crusaders learned much from the Arab scientists. Especially in mathematics—where Arabic numerals and algebra simplified all calculation—in medicine—where the orientals taught the study of disease as a natural phenomenon, to be treated by diet and hygiene—and in astrology. Ptolemy's *Almagest* was eagerly read. Gradually the Christians became acquainted with the Arab point of view—that knowledge comes from experiment and observation, and not from a study of religion alone. In time the Christians would have come to that conclusion of their own accord; but the example of the orientals quickened their understanding. They discovered that a physician or a mathematician need not be a priest.

The Arabs had long been disciples of Aristotle, and European philosophers re-learned from them much of Aristotle that had been lost in the Dark Ages.

Navigation became simplified by acquaintance with the mariner's compass used by the Arabs—a magnetized needle bound to a straw or splinter of wood, floating in water. This invention was crude enough at that time, and little used for generations. But by the astrolabe of the Arabs,

Christian mariners learned to calculate latitude after a fashion.[1]

The explorations of the crusaders and the study of Arabian geography helped Europeans make useful maps for the first time. The works of Ptolemy and Idrisi became known to them. Returning pilgrims brought back more or less accurate descriptions of all the nearer East, with fantastic tales of what lay beyond. Sindbad was not the only merchant seaman to write down his itinerary. Christians who had thought Rome to be the center of the habitable world now placed Jerusalem in the center of their maps and became aware of distant seas, still unexplored.

In architecture, also, the crusaders had a hand. Their small cathedrals and chapels were designed after those at home—in the style of northern France. But they learned by their own experience, and by studying the Byzantine citadels, how to build large and habitable castles. From them Europeans learned the advantages of the double system of walls, one commanding the other—of barbicans or outworks, and flanking towers, and master towers.

So skilled were the artisans of Outremer that Frederick II brought back with him masons, painters, and mosaic workers to ornament his buildings at Palermo. At that time Palermo and Toledo and Constantinople—all three on the frontiers of the crusaders—were the centers of culture in Christendom.

For two centuries the crusades were the talk of Europe, and men who could write vied with each other in completing chronicles of the great undertakings. At first priests, then soldiers, and then intelligent observers wrote their narratives of events known to them—narratives besprinkled with miracles, with knightly heroism, and with fables. Minstrels added their songs, and from this great outpouring historians like William, archbishop of Tyre, began to put together connected records of events, sifting true from false. A few ardent spirits studied the Arabic and Byzantine chronicles. The

[1]Such inventions lay dormant for a long time in Europe. The Church frowned upon the new knowledge, and branded the mechanical contrivances of the Arabs as creations of the Evil One—along with naphtha and Greek fire.

Not until the great period of the Renaissance did Europeans as a rule make really practical improvements upon the simple inventions of the orientals.

threads of history, lost during the Dark Ages, were taken up again during the crusades.

The Changes

Three portions of Christian society were altered during the crusades. They would have changed in any event, but they were quickened and remolded by the stress of the great undertakings.

First, the feudal nobility. The barons pulled more than their weight in the wars; the loss of life and the drain of money fell most heavily upon them. For generations such lineages as the counts of Flanders, of Blois, of Champagne voyaged regularly into the East. Seldom were the lords of Avesnes or Coucy or Brienne absent from the frontier. Some families died out entirely, most of them lost their younger sons, and the whole class yielded place—especially in France—to the kings and the commercial class.

Second, the commoners. Many nobles, enlisting for the holy wars, freed their serfs. The *bourgeois*, who had little social standing at first in Europe, found themselves members of a new and respectable middle class in Outremer, because, although inferior to the nobles, they were above the native population. They owned dwellings and farms in the East, and could seek justice in a court of their own. Seamen and merchants thrived during the revival of trade overseas, and artisans took advantage of the demand for labor. Many peasants, bound to the soil, went off to work as craftsmen in the cities.

Third, the Church. At first the universal Church of Rome profited vastly from the crusades. After the capture of Jerusalem in the Twelfth Century the popes assumed leadership in Europe, until the policy of Innocent III, striving for actual empire, diverted the crusades to serve his own ends. By abandoning Jerusalem, by keeping for itself much of the treasure raised for the crusades, and by calling upon the crusaders to wage war against the heretics at home, the Church of Rome sacrificed the Kingdom of Jerusalem. And it lost the popular support that had come to it with the first

crusades. Men who enlisted under the papal banner as crusaders against the Hohenstaufen or in the Languedoc lacked the enthusiasm of the cross-bearers who had sought Jerusalem.

At the same time, the constant demands of the papacy for money to carry on the holy wars, while nothing was gained for Jerusalem and the Roman court grew more and more luxurious, at last outwearied the people's patience. The sale of dispensations—at first only the money claimed from men who had taken the cross and would not or could not go on crusade—changed gradually to the sale of indulgences—freedom from penance enjoyed by crusaders and sold to others who were not crusaders—and eventually to the outright sale of pardons.

All this helped bring about the exile in Avignon, and in time the Reformation.[1]

The Contributions

The crusades themselves shaped the future of our civilization in several ways.

The great military orders endured, and played their part in events, and left their traces in the fraternal orders of to-day.

Out of the needs of the crusades grew the first national taxation. To pay the cost of the undertakings, a tithe was levied on the wealth of those who remained at home.

A new economic scheme of things had to be devised after the first crusade, which had been carried on by sacrifice and

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[1]The crusades had a distinct effect upon the political fortunes of the different nations. They enhanced the power and the territories of France; they fed the fortunes of Venice; they extended the frontiers of Germany (to the east), Portugal, and the Spanish kingdoms. Byzantium at first profited from the exploitation of the movement, and then was crushed by the crusaders in 1204.

The effect upon the papacy has been well summarized by Dr. Ernest Barker. "The papacy had grown as a result of the crusades. Through them the popes had deposed the emperors of the West from their headship of the world, partly because through the crusades the popes were able to direct the common Christianity of Europe . . . without consultation with the emperors, partly because in the Thirteenth Century they were able to direct the crusade itself against the empire. Yet while they had magnified, the crusades had also corrupted the papacy. They became an instrument in its hands which it used to its own undoing."

indomitable purpose alone. Little actual money existed then, and almost no gold coins. The crusaders needed gold coins to carry on their journeys—silver and the baser metals being too weighty—and these were minted for them.

As the throngs of pilgrims increased, and the armies of the cross swelled in numbers, more property—cattle, land, or feudal rights—was sold at home to be turned into money, and spent all the way from the Loire or the Rhine to the Jordan. Trading cities thrived along the roads of the wayfarers, and trade grew brisker at home. Not only men, but money and property, were put into motion by the great enterprises.

The Templars took a step forward in international banking when they arranged for voyagers to deposit money in Paris and receive in exchange a letter on which they could draw money again in Acre or Constantinople. The newly founded Italian banking houses in Venice and Florence imitated them, and embarked besides upon the new business of carrying pilgrims east and bringing back merchandise from Asia.

On the heels of the cross-bearers, trade routes extended into the East, and merchants went freely to Aleppo, Baghdad, and eventually to India and China.

With the quickening of commerce, the setting forth of all the peoples of Christendom toward the East, the long isolation of the Dark Ages was broken. Fleets voyaged from Scandinavia and England into the Mediterranean, whither only venturesome dragon ships of the Vikings had gone before them. Portugal became a port of call, and Sicily turned into a veritable metropolis of the wayfarers.

Out of the Northern seas the Danes took ship, to encounter Hungarians and Lombards in the streets of Jerusalem. Far-wandering Scots argued with worldly wise Greeks in the squares of Constantinople. Shrewd Venetian adventurers steered their galleons into the Black Sea, and made the acquaintance of the ice-bound Slavs.

Ships were built larger to accommodate such throngs, and made the voyage in fleets for greater safety. The Mediterranean shores became familiar ground. And voyagers returned home with tales of new lands and wonders of the earth.

Travel increased between the cities of Europe, and the long stagnation became a thing of the past.

With the end of the crusades, and the closing of the Eastern trade routes—except such as the Venetians managed to keep open—the voyages did not end. As the gates of Islam were closed against the Christians, seamen began to seek a way around to the Indies and to Cathay—as they called China. In 1270 the Genoese sailed out to look for the Canary Islands, and after the fall of Acre they tried to circle Africa to get to India.

The voyages of the Portuguese navigators in the next century were in reality an attempt to recover the African coast by a crusading venture. And, two centuries later, Columbus set out to find Cathay bearing the crusaders' cross upon his sails, trusting that his voyage would pave the way for the recovery of Jerusalem. Instead, he happened upon America.

THE CASTLES IN SYRIA

Few of us realize that the castles of the crusaders in the Near East are standing to-day, for the most part. Travelers in familiar western Europe will find few vestiges of Twelfth Century building and art, because more modern work has replaced the medieval. But the voyager who is willing to explore the Near East will find whole districts unchanged since the medieval age.

The islands of the Knights—Malta and Rhodes—are well enough known and often visited. Since the Italian government has repaired the citadel in Rhodes, a moonlight walk around the ramparts yields the illusion of a return to the Fourteenth Century—when the "tongues" of all Europe manned the walls. And over the half moon of Smyrna's bay, the gray citadel of the Knights' towers—just now a wireless station for the Turkish military.

But it is in Syria, at present under the French mandate, that we find almost intact some of the scenes of the crusades.

Above the Syrian frontier there are still some vestiges of the crusaders, whose cathedrals in Tarsus and Edessa have been turned into mosques. Antioch, just within the border, has been demolished by earthquakes and war, and rebuilt where the old city stood by the river. Only a prostrate granite column shows where the Normans built their Cathedral of the Apostles; but on the heights above the city the medieval wall still stands, half ruined, and the citadel with its foundations atop the gorge of the Iron Gate.

In the rugged mountains south of Antioch the small crusader castle of Sahyoun is crouched on its pinnacle of rock, half preserved and overgrown with thorns.

On the coast below Sahyoun, the great black Marghab stands, its upper walls partly broken down and its lower corridors cluttered with rubble; but with two storeys of its round tower intact, and its chapel undamaged. The tower wall is badly cracked and will soon fall, while the chapel roof has been repaired. A few Arab families, some twenty-five people with the usual children, black goats, dogs, live within the castle's outer circuit[1] and a small forest has grown up in the reservoir.

Still farther south and on the eastern side of the mountains, Massiaf stands guard over its village, but with Syrian infantry, not Assassins, quartered around it. The tawny outer walls have not fallen in and the entrance tower—the strong point of an Arab-built castle—is fairly clear. The interior has collapsed in part since, as in most Arab castles of the time, mortar was not used to hold the stones in place.

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[1]The crusaders' castles in Outremer were much larger than contemporary buildings in Europe. Some of them are twice the size of Pierrefonds and Coucy, the largest in France. Marghab's outer wall encloses an area of more than 320,000 square feet. The Krak is 600 yards in circuit, and its sister, the Kerak of trans-Jordan—which is half preserved, since Baibars and the Moslems utilized it for so long—is 3,000 yards in its outer circuit.

They were solidly built, as well. Two methods of construction were used—small stone, usually basalt blocks about a foot square cemented together, as in Marghab and Tiberias—large limestone blocks fitted together without mortar, as in Tortosa and Banyas. Some of the stones in Banyas are seven feet square. Syria and Palestine are rich in rock, and the crusaders learned to make good use of it. Saladin brought it to Cairo and used it in his building there—the construction under the Fatimids, including the city wall, had been of brick.

Here begins the heart of the castle country, where one is often within sight of the other. Tortosa, one of the strongholds of the Templars, is overbuilt by a small Arab coast village, but the lower courses of the great walls are standing, and the Cathedral of Our Lady is deserted—its twin towers vanished—near the Moslem cemetery.

Safita's massive and lofty tower is sound enough, but the outer circuit has half disappeared under the Moslem village.

The mighty Krak des Chevaliers, standing aloof on the summit of a round hill, has endured for eight centuries. The Arab families have appropriated it, and its courtyards swarm with sheep and camels and varied filth. The chapel, however, has been kept clean and around the entrance to the *salle*—now dark and desolate enough—the crusaders' ornaments in stone are still intact.

Out on the coast Raymond's castle of Tripoli—they call it that—looks down on the modern alleys of the seaport.[1] It has been used for nearly everything, including a stable and a Turkish prison, and has more than half fallen to pieces from neglect. In France or Germany, the Krak would have been a mecca for sightseers.

Below the modern resort of Beirut, the twins Sidon and Tyre (now known as Saida and Sur) show more than remains of the crusaders' work, although the Turks overbuilt them. Ruins of St. Louis' castle, with a single enduring tower, crown the land side of Sidon.

Inland, two other twins, Belfort and Banyas, are much better preserved. In fact Belfort is a wonder, with its long

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[1]The crusaders followed two plans in their fortifications. First, usually along the coast and usually built by Templars, a lofty outer wall with massive square towers behind a deep moat, depending for security on its height and on a donjon within it. That was also the Arab plan, in general—followed in Massiaf and Tripoli and Tortosa.

Second, a citadel built on a hill summit apart from any town, and shaped to the contour of the ground, with the strongest feature of the castle placed where the hillside gave access to a besieger. This type is found along the inland roads, and was often built by the Hospital —as in the case of Marghab and the Krak. It was usually triangular—to fit the hill and reduce the number of corners—with numerous small round towers, and a low wall surmounting a sloping talus or base.

The great age of the crusaders' fortification was from 1130 to 1200. Château Pèlerin, the last great citadel to go up, was built in 1217.

corridors built into the rock, its embrasures peering out on a seemingly bottomless gorge.

Across the border in Palestine stands the Acre region, with its arc of protecting castles that sheltered Nazareth. Turon, Montfort, and Safed lie in ruins, while the black citadel of Tiberias traces its circuit through the drowsy streets of the little town by Galilee. In the heart of Acre itself the buildings of the crusaders are clearly visible—especially the quarters of the Hospitalers. South of Acre the almost impregnable Khaukab al Hawwa (Star of the Winds) and Château Pèlerin are half ruined but impressive still.

Of the churches and chapels of the crusaders, less remains. Many were converted into mosques and overbuilt, while Baibars and the Kharesmians destroyed the holy places of the Nazarenes ruthlessly. Nazareth itself and Mount Tabor —that had been a fortified monastery with an abbey, and had been besieged and captured and retaken many times—he destroyed stone by stone. In the Jerusalem region also the mamluks wrought havoc. But Baibars, and all the Moslem conquerors, spared the church at Bethlehem. Saladin preserved St. Anne's at Jerusalem. The work of the crusaders is visible all through Jerusalem—from the tiny marble altars in the Cavern of the Souls, to the beautiful pointed arches of the Sepulcher courtyard.

And throughout the region round the city their handwork is to be seen—from the small cathedral of Ramlah to the great mosque of Hebron.

In Jaffa and Ascalon their handwork has almost been obliterated.

Out in the island of Cyprus, however, their castles stand, and their cathedral at Nicosia.

The crusaders' castles in the East have passed from hand to hand, and have been neglected for some seven centuries—they have been used as quarries when convenient, and as robbers' haunts, and tenements for wandering Arab villagers. Few people know of them or visit them—except in the cita-

dels of Rhodes and Malta, built after the crusades—and, although the French High Commission in Syria is discussing measures to preserve the Krak, it is doubtful if any attempt will be made to save the castles from final destruction.

They remain deserted in a half-deserted country, and the very Arabs who live in their shadow know no more of them than that they are there. The sheep graze on their mountain slopes, the cactus climbs over the rubble beneath them, and lizards scurry across their great stones when the sun is warm.

They look down on the same countryside as before, where the camel strings pass and solitary horsemen go by in silence. The cisterns are heavy with green scum, and wind blows through the cracks in the towers. The land has not changed but the men have gone from it.

They are old, these castles, and the hills are steep. Hot is the sun at the desert's edge and heavy the rain. In time they will crumble into the hills—forgotten monuments of vanished men.

WHAT WE MODERNS THINK

For two centuries of the thousand-year strife between Islam and Christianity, the cross-bearers carried the war into Asia. They fortified themselves beyond the sea, making the valley of the Jordan the front line of Christendom. At the end of the two centuries they were driven out of this front line, because they were left without support in the face of the new Moslem forces drawn from central Asia.

Counter-attacks launched from Europe failed to recover this ground, and in the next centuries the Moslem attack swept on over the Mediterranean and into eastern Europe.

The crusaders sacrificed themselves in taking and holding that front line. While they were on the Jordan, the rest of Europe—except in Spain, where the crusaders also appeared before long—was safe from Moslem aggression. And after the crusaders were wiped out, the experience gained in their wars, the new weapons and lessons learned in strategy and in fortification, and especially the new fleets built up during

the crusades, aided in the preservation of Europe when Christendom was placed on the defensive.

So, as a military venture in that long war, the crusades gained much. The loss was in the sacrifice of lives and wealth —the gain in experience.

So says the soldier.

With all this the scoffer will not agree. And just at present he is very much in fashion. He sees in the crusades a waste of hundreds of thousands of lives, and uncounted wealth. He reminds us that the first cross-bearers ate human flesh at need and stained their swords by savage massacres. And that later, adventurers and plunderers filled their ranks. It seems to him that these men set out to be saints and ended by being devils. He decries the whole thing as a failure.

The scoffer, however, is weighing men of the Twelfth Century in scales of the Twentieth. If he had lived when the crusaders lived, he would have known:

That other men as well had eaten human flesh at need.

That the crusaders ceased the massacres after the first onrush, when they had settled in Outremer—and thereafter the mamluks, for example, equaled the worst of their deeds.

That the feudal and political wars of the peoples in Europe went on continuously, while there was peace in Jerusalem after the crusaders' conquest for eighty years, and even truce at home during the great crusades.

That the venturesome crusaders instead of looking for fortunes in the East sold or mortgaged their property at home in order to journey into the East, and gained little thereby.

That instead of regarding themselves as saints, they were usually men who set out on crusade to expiate their sins. And so great was the peril of the venture that the Church accounted it the most arduous penance of all.

That, so far from being a failure, the people of that time looked upon the conquest of Jerusalem as a triumph, and the relics brought back as more than compensating for the losses. . . .

To-day the cynic is quite the vogue, and his voice outcries

the idealist. But there is, after all, something ignoble in belittling a mighty and unselfish undertaking, and in defacing the memory of men who sacrificed themselves. Nor does it become us of to-day, who have seen our world plunged into war for no apparent cause, to cast stones at those who fought during two centuries for what they believed to be the greatest of earthly causes.

We of to-day have rebuilt the forum of the Caesars and many temples. But we cannot restore the Kingdom of Jerusalem, where our ancestors sought, beyond the sea, to dwell beside the tomb of Christ in peace.

It is vanished, with the dream of Godfrey of Bouillon, and the exhortation of Saint Bernard, the ambition of Coeur de Lion, the pitiful seeking of the children, the devotion of St. Louis. The city is lost, the kingdom a memory, the chivalry of Outremer scattered, and the gardens and cathedrals built so patiently beyond the sea stand deserted, or house the new hordes of Asia.

And it will never return again. That day, when the crusaders built their little crude paradise around the Sepulcher, is past. When, after centuries, Christian pilgrims made their way back slowly to Jerusalem, they found ruins ill tended by the Moslems. They found the chapels of the crusaders, and the Garden of Gethsemane. They watched the sunsets darken over the Tower of David, and they stood by the pool where once an angel had troubled the waters. But they saw these things with changed eyes. They rebuilt the ruins, but not the city of which Godfrey had dreamed.

No one can rebuild the lost city, wherein for eighty years the faith of the crusaders lifted them out of the current of a merciless age. . . .

So says the idealist.

Say what we will, the crusades will endure as a cherished memory. We wonder at them—perhaps we do not understand them.

For to their own dark age the crusaders brought the fire of unselfish purpose. Around this fire they drew men from

all lands—centuries before the first alliance of peoples in our modern world. And by this light they went out into the unknown regions centuries before Europe could send forth its colonists.

And this spirit of the crusades was not in the world before they came, and it has not appeared again, after their passing.

No words of ours can alter what these men did—the best or the worst of them—who followed a star. They drained the cup of devotion, and if they tasted the dregs of shame, they knew also the exaltation of victory. They reached the summit of daring.

And the memory of *that* will endure long after our own workaday lives are ended.

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This book is based chiefly upon the original narratives or the annals of the amir Ousama, the Christian archbishop William of Tyre, the man of letters from Mosul, Baha ad Din, the Norman minstrel Ambrose, the soldier Ville-Hardouin—with the knight De Clari and the Byzantine secretary Nicetas—the Egyptian Makrisi, the monk Ernoul, the lord of Joinville, and the Syrian Abulfarag.

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